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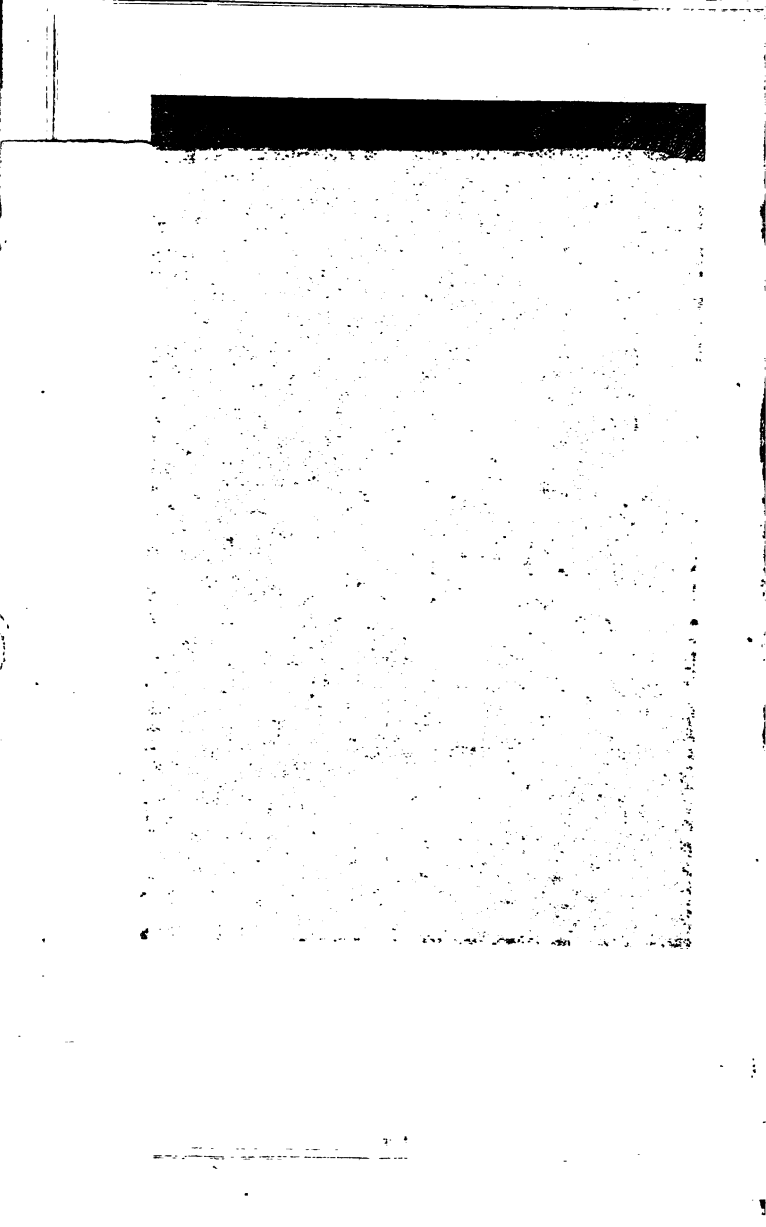

THE

WAY TO PROSPER,

OR

IN UNION THERE IS STRENGTH.

AND OTHER TALES.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

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PREFACE.

THE purpose of the Author in writing this book, has been to show the power of virtue, harmony, and fraternal affection among the younger members of a family, in securing their future well-being and prosperity. "In Union there is Strength." So trite is this saying, that the world seems almost to have forgotten its value, or no longer to regard it as a practical principle. The old man, who, as the story goes, brought to his children a bundle of sticks, understood the meaning of this sentiment fully. "Take, my sons," said, he, "each of you a stick and break it." The children obeyed, and the fragile rods were broken in their hands with scarcely an effort. Then he gathered the sticks together into a single compact bundle, and bade them try again; but union had given strength to the slender branches, and though each tried with his utmost power, yet the bundle of sticks was scarcely bent, much less broken. "Let it be thus with you in life, my child-

TRANSFER FROM C. U. MAR 1923

ren," said the father. "Stand close together, mutually sustaining each other, and you need have no fear of those who are against you."

The tendency of what is opposite, is also shown, by a contrast of character, in this volume; so that while the book gives motives for fraternal union, it pictures the sad consequences of discord in families, and shows how selfishness, ill-nature, and disregard of a brother's welfare, are evil seeds sown in early life, to yield, in after years, a plentiful harvest of disappointment, shame and misfortune.

THE WAY TO PROSPER.

CHAPTER I.

Two bright looking boys, each in his fourteenth year, stood talking one afternoon, a little before sundown, at a point where two roads met. The books under their arms showed them to be on their way from school. They were conversing about the future. Both were sons of farmers in moderate circumstances; and, as they were the oldest, it came to their turn first to leave the nest of home and go out into the world.

"Father says," remarked one of them, whose name was Victor Stevens, "that I ought to go to school a year longer. But I think I'm old enough to get my own living. As for more learning, I can gain that myself. It will be seven years before I'm a man, and in that time I can study a good deal and not neglect any work I may have to do."

"My father," said the other boy, named Peter Close, "thinks I've had enough schooling. He says that he never went to school but three months in his life, and believes that one-half the boys now-a-days, are ruined by too much learning. When did you say you were going to leave school?"

"I want to leave at the end of this quarter, though I'm afraid father wont consent to it."

"It will be up in three weeks."

"I know. Mother says I must go at least two quarters more; but, I think I can get father over to my side."

"Mother says I shan't go to Boston; for she knows it will be the ruination of me," said Peter. "But I mean to go there, if I have to run away. She wants to put me to Mr. Joice, the carpenter. But I won't be a carpenter."

"I am going to Boston when I leave school," remarked Victor. "Father and mother have both agreed to that. It is only about the time of my leaving home that there is any difference, but this will all come out right. They are older than I am, and know best; and if they still think I ought to remain at school awhile longer, I will try to be contented."

The two lads now parted. Victor walked along thoughtfully, and more with the air of a man than a boy. He had two brothers, younger than himself, who were to be raised and educated. Every year the family was becoming more expensive; and, as the income from the little farm was small, and his father and mother had to work very hard, he felt that it was not right for him to burden them any longer. He had already said so at home, but his parents wished him still to go to school. He was too young, in their view, to pass entirely from under their protection, away into a great city, where temptations were spread on every side for the feet of the youthful and unwary. Victor thought differently.

When the boy arrived at home, it was nearly sundown. A man, who was a stranger to him, parted with his father, just before he came up, and rode away. At supper time Mr. Stevens, who was usually cheerful, remained silent during the meal, and ate but little. Victor noticed this, and, as he had begun to observe and sympathize with his father in his cares and burdens, the change troubled him, and he very naturally attributed it to the visit of the stranger.

"Who was that man I met at the gate?" inquired the lad, as soon as he was alone with his mother after supper.

The question caused a shade to fall over the countenance of Mrs. Stevens. She replied to the question:

"Two years ago, you remember that we lost all our stock. A disease broke out among them, and carried off three valuable horses, two cows and thirty sheep."

The boy remembered the circumstance very well.

"In order to get stock again, your father had to borrow two hundred dollars, for which he gave a mortgage on his farm? That is, he gave the man from whom the money was borrowed the right to sell the farm and pay himself if he could not obtain his money in any other way. Up to this time the mortgage has remained, your father not having been able to pay off any part of it. The man you saw is the one from whom the money was borrowed."

"And does he want it paid back?" asked Victor.

"Yes, my son. It was to say this to your father that he called. But the expense of our large family has been so great that we have not saved anything. I don't know what we will do. Your father is very much troubled."

"Will the man sell the farm?" asked Victor, who felt deeply interested in what he heard, and fully comprehended the unhappy position of his father.

"I hope not. He is not a selfish man. But he is in want of money. Your father thought when he borrowed it, that at least one half could be returned in a year; but two years have rolled away and not a dollar has been paid on the debt."

"And every day father's expenses are growing heavier," said Victor, in his thoughtful, serious way.

"Yes—that is just the truth. I don't know what we are going to do."

Mrs. Stevens spoke in a desponding voice. The entrance of some one at the moment broke off the conversation. It made a strong impression on the mind of the boy. All his liveliest sympathies were awakened for his father, whom he saw staggering along under burdens that were almost too heavy to be borne. He lay awake for hours after going to bed, thinking about what he had heard, and musing over plans for the future. On the next morning, when he came down from his room, he saw his father in the little path that ran by the door, walking backwards and forwards, with his hands behind him and his eyes upon the ground. After reflecting for some moments, the boy went out and joined him, saying as he did so—

"I think, father, you'd better let me leave school at the end of the quarter, and go to a trade, I'm old enough now to earn my own living, and I'd rather do it."

Mr. Stevens continued to pace backwards and forwards, Victor now walking by his side, but without replying for some time.

"You're young, Victor," he at length said, breathing heavily as he spoke. "Too young to go out alone into the world. I did hope to keep you at home a year longer and let you go to school; but—"

The father's voice failed a little, and he checked his utterance. In a moment he recovered his self-control, and finished what he had meant to say.

"But the family is so expensive."

"I'm plenty old enough, father," answered the boy, in a cheerful, confident tone. "You know I'll be fourteen next October; and it's time I was earning my own living. I've had a good deal of schooling—my share, I think. The others must have their part, and if they can all get as much as I've received, they'll do very well. In a little over seven years, I will be free, and can earn money and help you to take care of the other children."

Mr. Stevens was touched by the generous independence of his boy; and, after reflecting for some time, said:—

"It shall be as you wish, Victor. But I am afraid you will find the trial of living away from home a far more serious one than you imagine. Boys who go into the city as apprentices have never a very easy time of it."

"I know all that, father. But, I must have a trade; and if some hardship has to be endured in order to get it, I will not complain. Many a boy, much younger than I am, has had to go away from home."

"What trade would you like to learn?" asked Mr. Stevens. "Have you thought about that?"

"Henry Lewis, who left home last winter, is learning to be a printer. I talked to him when he was up in May, and he said he liked the trade very well. He gets his board, and thirty dollars a year for clothes. Isn't that very good?"

"Thirty dollars a year won't buy very nice clothes, particularly when he gets to be eighteen or twenty years old."

"But he'll be free, you know, at twenty-one, and then he can earn a great deal more. He says that the foreman in the office gets twelve dollars a week, and that most of the journeymen earn from nine to ten dollars."

"Very fair wages. A prudent young man could lay up money. You think you would like to be a printer?"

"Yes, sir. I don't think I could learn anything better. I did think I would be a carpenter, but Edward Jones, who is apprenticed to Mr. Joice, says it is very hard work, and you're exposed a great deal."

"I would rather have you learn the printing business—I have an old friend in Boston, who carries it on; and if he does not want a boy himself, he can direct you to some good office."

"You mean Mr. Preston?"

"Yes. He's a very correct man, and will do right by you, if you go into his establishment."

The question of leaving school was settled from that hour. The pressure of circumstances forced from Mr. Stevens a reluctant consent to let his boy go out from under his roof at so tender an age, and seek his fortune alone in a large city. The mother no longer objected. The call for the payment of the mortgage had made both parents feel the stern necessity that existed for a lighter range of expenses, and the only mode of securing this, that presented itself, was that proposed by Victor.

"It's all settled," said Victor, with animation, when he met Peter Close next morning on his way to school.

"What's settled?" asked Peter.

"That I'm to go to Boston and learn a trade as soon as the quarter is up."

"And I'm going, too," said Peter. "I asked father last night, and he said I could go. Mother don't like it; but father's willing, and that settles it all. You're going to be a printer?"

"Yes. What trade will you learn?"

"The same."

"Then suppose we go together and try and get into one office. We'll be company for each other."

"Oh! I'd like that very much," replied Peter.

"So would I," returned Victor. "Father knows Mr. Preston, who has a printing office, and he's going to see if he won't take me as an apprentice."

"I wish he would ask him to take me, too. When do you mean to leave for the city?"

"In about a month. Mother will make me some

new clothes, and get all ready, so that I can start pretty soon after this quarter is up. I feel a little bad about going, when I think of it, now that all is settled. But this don't matter. Other boys have had to leave home, and I must do the same. If I don't learn a trade, I won't be able to support myself, and help father when I get to be a man."

"Help your father! what for?" asked Peter, rather surprised at the last remark, which he did not at all comprehend. "Your father don't want any of your help, does he?"

"He has to work very hard, and he will be getting old by that time."

"So does my father have to work hard, but he does not want me to help him."

"No, nor does my father. But he's worked for me, and I'm sure I shall be very glad to work for him when I am able."

Peter could not comprehend this. Sympathy for his parents had never been awakened in his mind, for the spirit of his home circle was not that of concord and mutual kindness; but, rather the opposite. Mr. Close felt the pressure of hard labor and a scanty income, and it [illegible]ted his mind, producing moroseness, and often ill temper. His wife did not possess, naturally, a very amiable disposition, and there had been little in the married life to soften and ameliorate her character. Between the children, there was little harmony of feeling; the younger were exacting, and the older tyrannical. When they were together, instead of mutual kindness, and good offices, it was a continued scene of discord. In consequence of all this, there was little

in the home of Peter that drew upon his affections, or created a desire to remain in it as long as possible. For his father he had but a small share of affection. Mr. Close was not a man to inspire a very strong filial regard. He entered into no pleasant, familiar intercourse with his children, and rarely spoke to them unless it was in language of reproof. It is not a matter of surprise that Peter felt no sympathy for him. In fact, he knew little about his external circumstances, and cared less, so that he obtained food when he was hungry and clothes to keep him warm. He had two brothers, their names were William and Francis.

Very different from the family of Mr. Close was that of Mr. Stevens—different in almost everything. The parents loved their children with an affection that looked to their future as well as their present good. They were fully aware of the great importance of an early right training and development of character, and had striven from the first to prevent discord, and produce harmony in their family circle. Victor, the oldest, was early taught to feel an interest in and to sympathize with his younger brothers, in all their wants and pleasures; and they were never permitted to encroach upon his rights. Almost the first lesson given to these children by their parents, was that of mutual respect and regard; and they checked instantly even the smallest departure from its practice. In all their little employments they were taught to help one another. An emulation in kind offices was the natural result; and a beautiful harmony was introduced into the family circle. This was not so easy a work to do.

The natural selfishness of the heart early manifests itself among children, in a violation of each other's rights; and unless parents exercise a most judicious control, they will grow up with certain feelings of dislike which will turn them away from each other when they become men and women. Family concord is a great achievement; but will not come unless parents love their children with an unselfish affection, and guard and guide their moral development with even a greater care than is bestowed upon their intellectual training and culture.

Mr. Stevens had three children. Victor, the oldest, in his fourteenth year; Hartley in his twelfth, and Thomas in his eighth year. These children would play together for hours, without jarring a discordant string; while the children of Mr. Close could hardly pass each other without indulging in angry words. If the latter attempted any play, it was generally broken up in less than five minutes, and, usually, because the younger ones rebelled against the oppressive and exacting tyranny of Peter. If he was away, the next oldest took his place as leader and oppressor, and so the everlasting din of strife was kept [illegible]day after day and from month to month. Fretted by all this, the parents scolded and punished; but with no good effect. The evil had taken too deep a root, and was growing with the growth and strengthening with the strength of their offspring. Instead of a bond of union, there was internal repulsion, waiting but the freedom of mature age to drive them asunder in the world, each taking his own way in total disregard of the other.

The opposite of all this, as we have intimated, distinguished the family of Mr. Stevens. Victor, whose thoughts for nearly a year had been reaching forward and meditating on the future, never formed a picture of success in his mind in which he made anything more than a part of the family group. The first desire he had, was to assist his father, and the only way he could do this in the present, was to relieve him of the burden of his support; and his next desire was, to aid, direct, and counsel his younger brothers as they should severally leave home and go out into the world as he was about going. He never thought of himself alone. Conscious of a native energy, and strong in his purpose to do his part on the arena of life, he was not troubled with doubts as to his own ability to get along. He thought, rather, of helping those who had helped him, and of those younger and weaker than himself who might need his hand to support them in the way.

Beyond himself, on the contrary, no thought of Peter Close wandered. He wished to leave home, because he imagined he would have more freedom and comfort as an apprentice in the city than he now enjoyed. Without any true affection for his brothers and sister, or even for his parents, a separation from them had in the idea nothing painful; but, if the truth must be told, something pleasant.

Here, then, are two families, and the oldest son of each about leaving home to make his entrance into the world. So for as external things are concerned, the prospects of these two families, and of

these two boys, are equal; but, how unequal, when internal things are considered!

The principle of strength in union governed in the one case; while inordinate selfishness produced a feeling of repulsion in the other.

CHAPTER II.

"Do not forget, my son," said Mrs. Stevens to Victor, on the eve of his departure for Boston, "your brothers at home. You are the oldest and go out first, and it will be in your power, I trust, to make their paths into the world smoother than if you had not gone before. You have had advantages which they may not possess. Your father's health may fail, or, he may die before they are as old as you now are, and be compelled to leave home at a tenderer age. Feel then, my son, that to a certain extent, their well-being in life depends on you. Success in the world is not so easy a thing, as you, in the ardor of your young hopes, may imagine. Men do not seek alone to build themselves up: too many, alas! strive to pull others down that they may rise on the ruins occasioned by their fall. You may, standing alone, secure success for yourself; but the result will be far more certain if you seek a union with your brothers as they come forward in life. You have certain qualities of mind requisite to a prosperous effort in the world, and Hartley has certain other qualities, equally neces-

sary. He will be a man soon after you come of age, and if you then unite your interests, mutual good will be the result. Alone, either or both of you might fail in your efforts, but together there will be little danger of this. By the time your brother Thomas is old enough to take his place in the world, you and Hartley will be able to extend to him a firm hand. In union there is strength, Victor. If you all band yourselves together, each bringing into effect his own peculiar ability, as if you were one man, you will all prosper. To care for your brothers and to seek their good, may keep you back a little; but when all are grown up, and you stand, side by side with a single purpose, you need not fear the pressure of adverse circumstances."

These words of his mother imbedded themselves in the mind of Victor. He felt their force and resolved that he would never think so much of his own success as to make him forget that of his brothers.

Mr. Stevens had already written to his old friend Mark Preston, who was a master printer in Boston, and the latter had agreed to give Victor a trial. If this proved satisfactory to both parties, he was to take the boy as an apprentice; making him an allowance of a certain sum weekly to pay for his boarding, and thirty dollars a year with which to purchase clothes. If the parents of Victor had been living in Boston, an arrangement like this would have been agreeable enough, but as the boy had not a friend, acquaintance, nor adviser in the city, his new position was to be one of care, responsibility, and danger. A cheap boarding house, in a

place like Boston or New York, is not the safest home for a lad of fourteen or fifteen years of age. This was sensibly felt by Mr. and Mrs. Stevens, but confiding in the principles of their boy, and committing him to the care of the Divine Providence they gave him their blessing and let him depart.

Alone, and without shrinking, that brave-hearted boy started for the great city, with the world before him. On arriving he was received kindly by Mr. Preston, who, from the moment he saw him, made up his mind that he would give every satisfaction.

"You think, then, that you would like to be a printer, Victor?" said Mr. Preston, on receiving the lad in his little office, where he sat almost buried among books and old papers.

"Yes, sir," was the firm reply.

"It's a very good trade: but hard to learn. That is, the boy who learns it has for the first year or two a pretty hard time of it."

"Other boys have learned the trade," was the simple remark of Victor to this.

"That's true enough my lad; and so can you. A little hardship in youth is what makes men of us."

This forewarning on the part of the master printer, did not give Victor even the most distant conception of what he was about to encounter. He did not receive his first lesson until the next morning. It was already past noon and Mr. Preston, after taking him to a boarding house, where two of his boys were living, told him that he might look

about the city until evening, but, to be sure to be at the office bright and early on the next day.

Victor did not sleep very soundly that night. Everything was new around him, and, moreover, a little different from what he had anticipated. The printing office, at which he had taken a glance, did not look very attractive, and the people at his boarding house were not particularly after his liking. How different was the woman who governed in this new home from his own mother. There was scarcely a sign of gentle feeling in a feature of her vulgar face. There were ten boarders in the house, all mechanics, and among them three journeymen and two boys working in Mr. Preston's office. By these, when introduced to them, at the supper table, he was received with a rude familiarity that he felt as exceedingly repulsive. Moreover, the conversation which was occasioned by his presence was far from being agreeable.

"So this is Preston's new devil!" said one of the men, with a laugh; and all eyes were upon the lad.

"Rather a green looking devil," said another, in a half undertone, yet loud enough for all to hear.

"He's just from among the peas and cabbages. But he'll not be green long, I take it," was the shrewd remark of one who had looked closely into the lad's face.

"He'd better have staid among the peas and cabbages," said a man named Perkins, who was a journeyman printer in the office of Mark Preston. This was spoken with evident ill-nature.

"Why so?" asked one of the boarders.

"Because, there are more at printing now than

can earn their salt. Every year it's growing worse and worse. The offices are all filling up with boys who are pushing out the journeymen. What they are all to do when free, is more than I can tell. Books are a drug in the market. The business has been overdone."

"That's true in almost every business," replied another to this. "It's true in our business. Every master-workman is crowding in apprentices, who, in a few years, crowd out the journeymen. I feel angry whenever I see a boy come into our shop. I wish it were only here as it is in England, where a handsome fee has to be paid before a boy can be entered for a trade. We would not have so many cabbage-heads poured in upon us from every town and village within sixty miles around to take in a few years the bread out of our mouths."

"Just my opinion," said another, turning his eyes with a scowl upon Victor as he spoke. "If I had my will, I'd pass a law prohibiting any master workman from having more than two apprentices."

"So would I," and

"So would I," ran round the table.

"It's all very well for you to talk now," said the landlady to this—she had three sons all learning trades: "but you sung to a different tune when you were boys."

"I've no objection to city boys learning trades," was answered to this.—"I expect mine to do so. But to have six or seven hundred country clod-hoppers thrusting themselves in, each year, to the ruina-

tion of everything, is more than I can stand—and more than I will stand."

"I rather think you're not going to lie on a bed of roses during your devilship," remarked one who sat near Victor, addressing the lad in a kind voice.

"He may take my word for that," said Perkins, one of Preston's journeymen, with an angry glance at the lad.

"He'd better go and hang himself at once," was the encouraging words of another.

"He'd better go back to the country and learn to be a farmer," said Perkins. "Then he will have something before him a little better than starvation. Two-thirds of the boys now learning trades will not be able to get a hand's turn to bless them, after their times are up."

"I guess they'll manage to live," remarked one who had not joined in the conversation, and who disapproved of the kind of reception given to the strange boy, as well as the sentiments expressed. "Every new comer makes new wants."

"O yes; you can talk," was the half-angry and insulting reply of Perkins.

The man did not choose to enter into a controversy with such antagonists as were around him, having had some experience on the subject, and therefore remained silent. But he felt sympathy for the lad, and made up his mind to encourage him in his new and trying position when the opportunity offered. His name was Franklin.

After supper, one of the lads apprenticed to Mr. Preston, named Thomas Lee, showed a friendly dis-

position towards Victor, and entered into conversation with him.

"Where are you going to-night?" he inquired.

"No where," Victor replied.

"You're not going to sit moping here until bed time?"

"I don't know any body in Boston."

"Have you any money?"

"Only a quarter."

"That'll do. I'm going to the theatre. Won't you come along?"

Against the theatre both the father and mother of Victor had particularly cautioned him as the high way to ruin. He therefore replied with great promptness,

"No, I can't go."

"Why?" asked the boy.

"My father and mother don't wish me to go."

This was met by a hearty laugh of ridicule, in which two or three others, who had heard what had passed between the two boys, joined.

"He'll soon get over that," remarked one of the men, who had been at the supper table, shrugging his shoulders.

"Very right, my boy," said the man named Franklin, speaking to Victor, as soon as the others had retired. "Keep ever in mind the counsel of your father and mother. The theatre is a very bad place for boys, and few lads ever come to much good who habitually go there. Keep your money for a better purpose; you will have use for it. And you must not mind what all these people say to you. Be honest, industrious and prudent, and you

will do well enough. If things are a little hard at first, don't feel discouraged. Others have passed through them before. It will not last forever.

Victor was more grateful for these timely and encouraging words than he could express.

The kind of company into which he had fallen, and the manner in which he was received, proved so different from any thing he had imagined, as utterly to confound him. The well-timed words of approval and encouragement spoken by Mr. Franklin, came just at the right moment and restored the trembling balance of his feelings. At an early hour he retired to bed, and lay awake for a long time, thinking over his first few experiences in city life. He then dropped off to sleep, and did not wake until the sun was shining in at the window of his chamber in the attic.

CHAPTER III.

REMEMBERING the injunction of Mr. Preston to be at the office bright and early, Victor arose as soon as he awakened, and forthwith repaired to the place where unknown and undreamed of trials awaited him. As he entered the printing office about six o'clock, he was met by Perkins, the journeyman before mentioned.

"Pretty time of day this to come to work!" said that ill-natured personage. "I thought country boys were used to being up with the lark. Take that bucket and go and get some water.

"Where from?" asked Victor.

"From the pump. Do you think there are springs bubbling up in the city?"

"Where is the pump?" inquired the boy, lifting the bucket, and standing with a look of inquiry on his face.

"Round the corner. There now! Be off with you! Why do you stand gaping like a sheep?"

Victor left the office with the bucket in his hand, and went to the nearest corner; but saw no pump. He came back, passed the office, and went round the corner next beyond, where he found the object of his search. Filling his bucket he returned as quickly as possible, and was greeted by Perkins, with—

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"Why didn't you stay all day?"

"I went round the wrong corner," said Victor.

"You must be a stupid fellow. But don't stand moping there. Go and sweep out the office. You'll find a brush in the press room."

Victor didn't know where to find the press room, but he started toward an open door, and was fortunate enough to go right, and to find the brush. Coming back into the room he had first entered, he commenced sweeping; but had only made a few strokes with the brush when his persecutor cried out, with an oath—

"What do you mean, you young vagabond! Why don't you sprinkle the floor? Do you want to choke us all to death?"

Just at this moment, Mr. Preston entered. He cast upon Perkins a look of rebuke, which produced an instant change in that personage, who cowered away, and went off into the press room.

"Where is Edward?" asked Mr. Preston.

"Up stairs," was answered.

"Go and call him down."

Edward was called.

"I don't want you to give up quite so soon," said Mr. Preston, when the lad appeared. "You can go on as usual for two or three days, until Victor begins to understand a little about the place."

The boy thus addressed filled a basin with water, and commenced sprinkling the floor by dashing it over the side of the basin with his hand.

"There is another brush in the press room," said Mr. Preston, addressing Victor. "Get it, and help Edward to sweep out the office. After a day or

two I will want you to do this every morning yourself."

Victor got the other brush and went to work as directed. The press room, composing room, and office were all swept out, and various other things done, when the hour for breakfast came. After returning from this meal, Victor was sent with a proof to a bookseller. When he came back he was set to work removing sheets from the press; and after the boards had been emptied, others were put in their places. Plenty was found for him to do until dinner time; and among other things, he was called upon to "to run the mail," or, in other words, to bring liquor for the journeymen. After dinner he was kept as busy until night fall, when he went home to his boarding house, so tired that he could hardly drag himself along. He was not only tired, but, to a certain extent, disheartened; for scarcely a kind word had been spoken to him since morning, except by Mr. Preston. The journeymen ordered him about in a tone of rough and insulting command, and one or two of the boys, seeing in him a good subject, made him a butt of ridicule. All this Victor bore without manifesting resentment. He was rather hurt than angry by the unkindness.

After supper, Mr. Franklin spoke again encouragingly to him. He also warned him of the many dangers that were in his way, and urged him, as he valued his success and well being as a man, to avoid yielding, even in the smallest degree, when temptations presented themselves. All this strengthened the heart of the lad, and, when he laid his head

upon his pillow, he was less unhappy than on the night before. A tired body brought a sound repose. Rising with the first beams of the sun he hurried to the office, and had it half swept out before Edward, the boy who had been directed to assist him, arrived.

It is not our purpose to picture singly and minutely the daily trials, sufferings and hardships through which this boy had to pass before he acquired a sufficient knowledge of the business to place him out of the reach of oppression and persecution. They were very severe. More so than usually falls to the lot of apprentices, though not greater than were borne by other boys who filled, at that time, the place of "devil" in a printing office. The very name applied to the boy who was required to do all the drudgery, odd turns and errands of the office—who was to run at the beck or call of master, journeyman, or older apprentice—seemed to throw him beyond the pale of sympathy. For a whole year,—and often, two years,—Victor was kept in the office, receiving, daily, more kicks than kind words, and scarcely permitted to enjoy the luxury of an idle moment. It required a boy of stout nerves and good resolution to run the gauntlet. Resistance and retaliation only made matters worse, for the odds of force were entirely against the "devil." This Victor was quick to perceive, and he therefore, schooled himself to endurance from the first.

It was understood, that, after a three months' trial, Victor should be permitted to go home and see his parents for a couple of days, and that, if all parties were satisfied at this time, he should be

indentured as an apprentice. When the lad went home at the expiration of this period, it was with feelings of discouragement. Not on account of the hardships of his condition, for he had resolution enough to bear them; but the journeyman named Perkins had taken every opportunity, knowing, as he did, that Victor was on trial, to fill his mind with the notion that there were already too many at the business.

"Tell your father," said he, on the eve of Victor's departure for home, "that he'd better put you to a wood-sawyer than to a printer. All the masters are filling their offices with boys, and discharging the journeymen; and what these are going to do when they are free is more than I can tell. I know twenty journeymen printers, now in the city, who can't get a day's work. Only a week ago, three as good printers as are to be found any where, enlisted to keep from starving. The business is entirely over done."

All this Victor faithfully reported to his father, and in a tone of discouragement. Mr. Stevens asked many questions about Perkins; as to his character, conduct and habits; and when Victor had answered these, he was fully prepared to give him correct advice.

"Pay no regard, whatever, to any thing such men may say to you," was the language of Mr. Stevens. "The world is advancing much faster than selfish, short-sighted persons like Mr. Perkins imagine. The increasing wants of society will always find employment for its members in the various pursuits to which they apply themselves.

If, in a particular branch of business, there should occur a surplus of labor, those who are most skillful, and are at the same time, sober and industrious, will be those who will find employment; while the lazy, drunken, or bad workmen, will be driven off to other and less profitable callings. Ever faithfully discharge your duty to your employer, my son, and you need not fear that, so far as you are concerned, any business will be overdone. Be an industrious apprentice, and, at the same time, gain a thorough knowledge of your art, and you need not feel any concern about success in the world when you become a man."

Victor understood this, young as he was, and felt its force; and, moreover, it came with double conclusiveness to his mind, because it was the opinion of his father, in whose judgment he had the utmost confidence.

As to the hardness of his work and the many unpleasant things connected with his situation, Victor made no complaint. He knew that it would only make his mother unhappy, and tend to discourage his brother Hartley, who would soon have to follow in his footsteps.

"It won't last forever," was the lad's secret consolation. To his father, however, he confided much in regard to the particular trials and temptations by which he was surrounded; not in a complaining spirit, but in order to receive his parent's counsel. The advice of Mr. Stevens, coming as it did in entire accordance with his own first impressions of right, encouraged him very much. Particularly was he strengthened by the warm approval of his father

when he told him of many instances in which he had refused to do what he thought to be wrong, though strongly urged to step aside by his associates.

"To see you so firm in doing what is right, my son," said Mr. Stevens, "gives my heart a feeling of pleasure that I cannot describe. I feared, lest, when away from home, amid a thousand temptations, the voice of your parents might grow faint in your ears. Thus far it has not been so. Your obedience has not ceased with bodily separation. Our love for you, and our care over you, is not lessened, but is increased by your absence. We think of you daily, we pray for you daily, that the Father of all good would keep your feet from straying. And He will so keep you, if you continue to live in parental obedience, even though separated from the home of your early years."

When Victor returned to Boston, it was with a firmer heart, and stronger resolutions to do right, and only right, in any and in all circumstances. He was now fourteen, and, in accordance with the original agreement, was regularly bound until he should be twenty-one years of age.

CHAPTER IV.

During the visit of Victor, Mr Close, the father of the lad previously mentioned, called upon Mr. Stevens to ask his advice about sending his son into

the city, and to inquire if there was an opening in the office where Victor was apprenticed, Peter having declared his wish to become a printer. He complained bitterly of his difficulties, and spoke rather discouragingly of his boy, whom he represented as self-willed, headstrong, and easily led away. "I'm afraid I shall have trouble with him," said he, with a sigh. "If he were not so overbearing and quarrelsome among his younger brothers, I would try to keep him home longer; but it is high time that he was under a strict master."

"There are many temptations in a large city," remarked Mr. Stevens.

"I know. And the thought of this makes me anxious. But I cannot keep him at home; and, besides, he must get a trade. He will have to take his chance with the rest. Who is your boy with?"

"A Mr. Preston."

"Do you know anything about him?"

"He is an old acquaintance, and from what I know of him, believe that he will do all that is right. Victor speaks well of him."

"Does he?"

"Yes. He says that he is kind to his boys, but makes them work."

"That's all right enough."

"Oh yes; I've no objection to that."

"I wonder if I couldn't get Peter with him?"

"That is more than I can tell."

"I would like to very much. Your son is a steady boy, and his influence over Peter would be great."

"I will write to Mr. Preston when Victor goes back, and make inquiry on the subject. Even if he should not want a boy he may know of some one who does."

"You will oblige me very much, indeed," said Mr. Close. "I have not a single acquaintance in Boston, and, therefore, am without facilities for procuring a place for my son."

Mr. Stevens was as good as his word; but the master of Victor did not, then, wish to take another apprentice. While at home, Victor and Peter had seen each other every day and talked over the matter. The former felt a good deal interested in his old school-mate and play-fellow, and was anxious to have him at Mr. Preston's. It was, therefore, with no little disappointment that he wrote home to his father, immediately on his return, that Mr. Preston wished him to say that, for the present, he did not care to take another boy, and did not know of an opening in any printing office.

"Tell Peter," said Victor, in this letter, "that I will do my best to get him a place somewhere."

And the boy was successful. It was a month before he was able to get a place for Peter, and in the effort to do so, he visited, as opportunity offered, nearly every printing office in the city.

When Peter Close came down to Boston, Victor was ready to welcome him. He had already gained the consent of the printer who was to be his master, to let him board at the house where he was boarding; and the landlady had, of course, no objection to their sharing the same bed.

It was a bright day for Victor when Peter ar-

rived. He felt it almost as a gleam of sunshine from home. How much pleasure did he anticipate from their nightly re-unions, after long hours of hard labor. On Sundays—blessed seasons of rest for overtasked apprentices!—they could always be together.

"How do you like your place?" was the first question of Victor, on meeting with Peter at supper time, after the close of the first day.

Peter looked rather serious, but replied, though in no very cheerful voice—

"Pretty well."

"It is not like being at home, you know," said Victor, encouragingly. "I havn't found all just as I could wish. But, it won't last forever."

"Do the men swear at you?" asked Peter.

"Yes; but I try not to mind it."

"One of them called me a ——," repeating some vile language. "I was so mad I could have thrown something at his head."

"That wouldn't have done any good," said Victor, "and might have lost you your place."

"But he's no right to talk to me in that way."

"Still you can't help it. We are boys, and strangers in the city. If we lose the places we have, we may not be able to get others. Don't mind it, Peter. I put up with a great deal."

"If he calls me that again, I'll tell Mr. Ludlow," remarked Peter, in whom the spirit of antagonism was pretty strong.

"No, Peter, don't do that. You'll only get the ill will of the men; and, if you do, they can make it ten times as hard for you as it would otherwise be."

"He's no right to speak so to me?" persisted the lad, indignantly.

"All true enough," urged Victor, "but hard words are easier to bear than blows."

"Did any of the men ever strike you?" inquired Peter.

"Yes; a good many times."

"No man in our office shall lay his hands on me, but Mr. Ludlow," was the boy's indignant remark, on hearing this. "It's bad enough to be scolded and cursed."

"I know it is, Peter. And the men have no right to strike us. But they will do it sometimes. And then, if we complain, they will tell their own story, and make it appear that we deserved all we got, and a great deal more. It won't last always. In a year or two we will be old enough to remain at case, and then the pressmen won't have any thing to do with us."

"I'm not going to be struck," persisted Peter. "I'll knock any man down that strikes me."

In this spirit the boy went to the office on the next morning. As he came in, a journeyman very much resembling Perkins in character, swore at him for a lazy vagabond.

"I'm no more of a vagabond than you are," was Peter's quick reply. The words were scarcely out of his mouth, before he received a blow alongside of his head from the open hand of the journeyman, that knocked him half across the room. Just at this instant Mr. Ludlow, the master printer, came in.

"What's the meaning of this?" he asked, in a good deal of excitement.

"The young scoundrel called me a vagabond," said the journeyman.

"He did? Upon my word that's a fair beginning. See here, Peter!" Mr. Ludlow spoke sternly.

The boy approached.

"How came you to call Mr. Bell a vagabond?"

"He swore at me, and called me one first," replied the lad.

"It's a lie, you young scoundrel!" retorted the journeyman promptly.

"A very nice beginning, I must confess!" said Mr. Ludlow. "A little too nice for me! I don't want any such boys about my establishment. So, my young chap, you can just take yourself off as quickly as you please. I'll pay your board for one week to give you a chance to get another place. After that you must shift for yourself."

Peter tried to say something more in his own defence; but Mr. Ludlow cut the matter short, and told him to go about his business. This was rather a hard case for the boy. So sudden a loss of his situation completely dashed him to the earth. When he met Victor at breakfast time, tears were in his eyes as he related the disastrous termination of his apprenticeship with Mr. Ludlow. His friend consoled him as best he could.

"I will go and see Mr. Ludlow to night. I know where he lives," said Victor. "Maybe, after thinking about it, he will take you back again. I wish you hadn't said what you did to the journeyman."

"He'd no business to call me a lazy vagabond."

"I knew that, Peter. But dont you see that we can't help ourselves. Better be called a lazy vaga-

bond than not get a trade. His saying so don't make it so. Words won't break our bones."

"I know that. But ——"

"It's no use to think of having every thing just as we like it," said Victor, interrupting him, "for it can't be. You must either put up with a great deal, or go back home again. It's folly for you to attempt to fight your way, for you are weak while all around you are strong."

"Well, it's a shame!"

"I know it is, Peter. But we can't help it."

That evening, Victor went to see Mr. Ludlow, after getting Peter to promise that, if taken back, he would act differently. Since morning, the printer had been informed as to the provocation received by Peter, and, in consequence, blamed the lad much less than at first. It did not take any great deal of persuasion to induce him to take Peter back, which he did, after giving him a serious lecture.

"If you expect to get along in a printing office," said he, "you must make up your mind to bear a good deal for the first year or two. To attempt to fight your way with the men and older boys, will only make things ten times worse for you than they would otherwise be. Do your work quickly and as well as you can, and let that be all you care for. As to quarreling and fighting, that is out of the question; and if you dont think you can get along without it, you'd better not come back into the office."

As might have been expected, Peter's belligerant conduct only gained him the ill-will of the journey-

men, who took every opportunity that offered to oppress him. Not having much control over himself, he would, at times, speak out what was in his mind; and the consequence always was, a blow, or a threat, that caused him instantly to bridle his tongue. He complained a great deal to Victor Stevens, whose situation was little better than his own, only not rendered well nigh intolerable by ineffectual resistance and murmurs.

Peter Close had only been in Boston three or four days, when he proposed to Victor to visit the theatre.

"I have no money to spend in that way; and, if I had, I would not think it right to go," replied young Stevens.

"It won't cost any thing," asked Peter.

"Why not?" inquired Victor.

"One of the boys at our office told me all about it. You go in with checks."

"How do you get the checks?"

"Why, you see, after a part of the play is over, if any one wants to come out for a little while, the door keeper hands him a check. A great many who come out in this way don't care about returning, and give their checks to the boys, who can get in with them and see the rest of the play."

"I wouldn't be a beggar of checks, even if I thought it right to go to the theatre," said Victor, with an independent air.

"What harm is there in going?" asked Peter.

"My father said, when I left home, that he was particular in not wishing me to go to the theatre, as it was a place where boys were most likely to be

led into evil ways. I promised him that I would not do so; and I will not. For me it would be very wrong."

"Well, my father didn't say any thing to me about it, and I'm going."

"I wouldn't, if I were you, Peter."

"Why wouldn't you?"

"It's a bad place. Besides, I'd be more independent than to beg checks."

"Other boys do it; and I don't see that I'm so much better than they are."

"I can tell you what it is, Peter; I feel myself a great deal better than boys who have no more respect for themselves than to turn beggars," replied Victor, tossing his head with an independent air.

"Though, for all that, you let the men in your office curse you and beat you about as if you were no better than a dog."

"I can't help myself so far as that goes; but I can help begging checks at a theatre-door. I'd put my hand in the fire before I'd do it."

"Well, I don't care what you think," returned Peter, "I'm going to the theatre. I've always wanted to see a play."

It was in vain that Victor reasoned with and persuaded the boy. He was bent on visiting the theatre, and he carried out his purpose. To Victor he described what he had seen in the most glowing language, and urged him to go with him on the next night. But the lad was immovable.

On the first Sunday after Peter came to the city, Victor asked him to go to church with him: but

Peter said, no—he didn't like to go to church. His father hardly ever went.

"But didn't he say that you must go to church?" asked Victor.

"He said that he'd like me to attend some church, but didn't say I *must* go."

"He would rather have you do so, Peter; and now that you are away from him, you ought to do what you think would please him even more strictly, if there is any difference, than if he were present."

But Peter saw no force in this argument. Parental restraint had always been irksome to him, and he had no disposition voluntarily to assume the yoke of obedience. He was now free to do what he pleased, and go where he pleased on Sundays, and he was fully disposed to make good use of the privilege.

Victor Stevens acted altogether differently. He observed the Sabbath as a day of worship and religious instruction. Sunday schools had but recently been established. Mr. Franklin, who boarded in the house with him, was a teacher, and Victor, through his recommendation, attached himself to one of them, and attended regularly, every morning and afternoon. He also went regularly to church.

Thus differently did these two lads choose their ways in entering upon life; and it was not long before their paths made considerable divergence. Peter was soon so entirely fascinated with the theatre and the low company he met there, that he might be found nightly at the doors seeking for an opportunity to obtain entrance in the way just mentioned. On Sundays, he went off to stroll in

the woods and fields, or to sail in the harbor. As for attending church, that was a thing never done. Victor frequently remonstrated with Peter, but to no purpose; and the latter even so far forgot his good feelings and sense of propriety, as at times, to join some others in ridiculing his old school companion and friend as a "saint."

CHAPTER V.

Two years of hard trials, endurance and suffering were passed by Victor, when his age, and the skill he had acquired in type-setting, removed him from a position in which but little sympathy or consideration had ever been extended towards him. During all that long period he had been careful to complain but little to his parents. That, he reflected, could do no good, and would only make them unhappy. Steadily he adhered to his first resolution of strict obedience to their wishes; and in all cases, where his mind was in doubt, he wrote home to his father, or consulted him at the time of his semi-annual visit to the home of his childhood. At Sunday school, he was a regular and attentive scholar, and not a single Sabbath during the two years had he been absent from church. This attendance at Sabbath school brought him into association with boys of a very different class from those whom Peter found hanging around the doors of the theatre, or hunting bird's nests and strolling in the

fields on Sunday. With one of his Sabbath school friends, the son of a widow, Victor became particularly intimate; and as the mother of the boy liked Victor, and felt for his lonely situation, separated, as he was from his friends, and in a strange city, she invited him to come home with her son every Sunday evening, after school, and take tea with the family. Most highly did the boy esteem this privilege. The widow's name was Redmond. She had two children—William and Anna. William was nearly the same age as Victor, and Anna was some two years younger.

The thought of meeting with this kind family every Sunday evening, made the boy's toil lighter through the week. Mrs. Redmond was a pious woman, and early taught her children a reverence for God, and a strict obedience to his commandments. On Sunday evenings she read the Bible and talked to them on subjects connected with religion and their duties in life. In doing this, she was careful not to weary their young minds; and but rarely did she do so. What she said, uttered as it was in appropriate words, and at the right time, generally made its due impression. It was the genuineness of her affection that gave life to her precepts. It is not speaking too strongly to say that Victor loved Mrs. Redmond. To him, she was only second to his own mother, and she felt for him soon after he began to visit in her family, something of a mother's regard, and manifested it in a care for him such as a mother's feelings would be quickest to prompt. The sum which Victor received for the purchase of clothes, was not sufficient

to procure any but the plainest, and what he had, often became unfit to wear for want of proper mending, long before they would, otherwise, have been thrown aside. Mrs. Redmond soon observed this, and thinking how glad she would be if some kind person would take the same care of her own boy, if he were away, determined, as a matter of feeling as well as duty, to assume the care of looking after the boy's clothing. She had them given to her own washerwoman, who charged Victor no more than he had been paying, and when they came home, she looked over and mended them herself or let Anna do it. Every Saturday night Victor came for his bundle of clean clothes, and on Monday mornings, as he passed to the office, left those he had thrown off for the wash. His work was the dirtiest work in the office, and it was impossible to keep from getting all his garments badly soiled; but the thought that they would all go to Mrs. Redmond's made him doubly careful after she kindly took charge of them, and the effect was his greatly improved appearance, which was noticed by his master and all in the office, and created for him a feeling of respect that saved him from many acts of oppression.

Mrs. Redmond also took charge of the purchasing of his clothes, and, by this means, made the slender income of Victor go a great deal farther than otherwise would have been the case. Occasionally, she would add a trifle from her own purse in buying a garment, so as to improve the quality. But of this kind act the boy remained ignorant, although in the enjoyment of the good which flowed from it.

For Peter Close, there was no one to care after this generous manner. He selected different companions, and walked in a different way. Such a thing as true kindness and sympathy never visited nor cheered him. His associates, like himself, sought only their individual pleasure, and cared for each other only so far as the companionship enabled them to attain the ends they had in view. The difference in the personal appearance of the two boys was very marked. While Victor, particularly on Sundays, looked neat and tidy, Peter's clothes were worn in a slovenly manner, and he hardly ever had a decent garment to put on. When Sunday nights came, he usually returned from his rambles tired and dissatisfied; and was often moping in his boarding house, while Victor was sharing the pleasant home of his Sunday school friend, William Redmond.

Two years, as we have intimated, had passed away, and Victor was about being relieved entirely from the general duties of the office, to which, as one of the younger boys, he had, from the first been devoted. At this time the visit of a week at home was permitted.

"Are you going to take another apprentice?" he asked of Mr. Preston, respectfully, on the day he was about starting for the country.

"Yes; I must have some one in your place now that you are to go into the composing room," said Mr. Preston. "Do you know a good boy?"

"My brother Hartley would like to learn the business."

"Ah, would he? How old is Hartley?"

"He's just fourteen."

"He's a good boy, I suppose."

"Yes, sir; I know he is." There was an air of pride and pleasure in the voice of Victor as he made this reply.

"Is your father willing that two of his sons should become printers?"

"If Hartley likes the business, he would think it best for us to have the same trade, for then we could work together and help each other."

"The youngest boy in a printing office has a hard time of it, as you well know; you would not like to see your brother treated as you have been by the men and boys."

Victor looked earnestly into Mr. Preston's face for some moments, before replying. Then he said—

"I could show him and help him a great deal without neglecting my work, and so make it easier for him. And I know that some of the men would be kinder to him for my sake, than they would be to a boy who had no one in the office to take his part."

"But might not your interference for Hartley get you into difficulties with the men and older boys?"

"I am not quarrelsome," said Victor—again looking up steadily into his master's face.

"No, Victor, I will give you credit for being a peaceable, good disposed boy," returned Mr. Preston, in a voice of approval. "And I am so well pleased with you, tell your father, that I would like to have another of his boys if he has one to spare."

A light flashed over the face of Victor as Mr. Preston said this, and, in spite of his manly effort to control his feelings, the tears came into his eyes. Not trusting himself to speak, he bowed with a grateful heart, and retired from the presence of his master.

Mr. Stevens' affairs had not improved a great deal, although relieved of the burden of Victor's support. The mortgage had only been reduced fifty dollars—although it was out of the hands of the man who first held it, and was in the possession of another person, who was satisfied to let it remain so long as the interest was regularly paid. Still it was felt as a burden, and the wish to have it removed was ever uppermost in the mind of Mr. Stevens. As the younger members of his family came forward, the expense of their maintenance increased, and the necessity for Hartley's leaving home became every day more apparent. Victor understood this previous to his visit home, and was, also, aware of the views of the family on the subject. Hence his application to his master. When he communicated to his father what Mr. Preston had said about wishing to have another one of his boys, he was so well satisfied with the first, Mr. Stevens' pleasure was very great.

"If Hartley is willing, he shall go back with you," said he, without hesitation.

Peter Close knew nothing of Victor's intention to get his brother Hartley into the office with himself until the two boys came down from the country. Peter no longer boarded in the same house with Victor, having left it to go into a family where

two or three of his most intimate associates were living. On meeting Victor, after learning that Hartley had come to Boston, he said to him, with manifest surprise—

"And is your brother really going to be a printer?"

"Certanly he is," replied Victor.

"And he's in Preston's office?"

"Yes."

Peter shook his head with a disapproving air.

"What is your objection?" inquired Victor.

"In the first place," said Peter, "there never should be two of a trade in one family; and, in the second place, two brothers will never agree as apprentices in the same shop or office."

"I think very differently from that. If two or even three brothers learn the same trade, the oldest can help the younger ones, and all can unite together when they are free and make their success in the world more certain. As to not agreeing as apprentices, it seems to me that they are the very ones to agree best. I'm sure Hartley and I will agree well enough."

"And I'm very sure that my brother Bill and I would not agree for a week. We never did at home for an hour. Father wants Bill to be a printer, and wrote to me to ask Mr. Ludlow to take him. We wanted a boy just then in the office, but I knew Bill wouldn't suit; and, besides, I didn't want him there. So I waited until the place was filled and then wrote home to father that Mr. Ludlow had as many boys as he wanted, and wouldn't probably take another for a year. And,

besides, I said all I could to discourage him in regard to our trade. The fact is, there are too many at it now. There are scores of journeymen walking about the streets with nothing to do; and how will it be when the swarm of apprentice boys, at present filling all the offices, are free?"

Victor was so surprised at this declaration, that he hardly knew what to reply. William Close was rather gentle and shrinking in his character, and needed the care, protection, and kindness of one older and stronger than himself. The heartless indifference of Peter really shocked him.

"I think you did very wrong," said he. "If you will not help and protect your brother, who is to do it? In Mr. Ludlow's office, it would have been in your power to lighten many a burden laid upon his shoulders; and you know, as well as I do, that, let him go where he will, they will be heavy and hard to be borne. William is not a bold, strong boy, able to make his way in the world as easily as you and I."

"I can't help it," replied Peter, impatiently. "I've got to make my way and he'll have to make his. I don't want him and am not going to have him at our office. That's settled. It will be a great deal better for us to have separate places. It's as much as I can do to take care of myself, without being troubled with him."

"How can you feel so unkindly towards your brother?" said Victor.

"I don't feel unkindly towards him. But I know it will be a great deal better for us to go along separate roads. We never did and never will agree

together; and there is no use in jarring and quarreling. I'll do all I can for him, if he ever needs my assistance; but it wouldn't be best to put us too close together. I know that well enough."

"Does William want to learn our trade?"

"So he said, when I was up last. But that was only because I'm at the business. He doesn't know what he would like. I said all I could to discourage him; but when he once gets his head set on any thing, there's no turning him away from it. I want him to be a carpenter. That's a good trade; he can learn it with Mr. Joice, and board at home all through his apprenticeship, which would be a great thing. Boston isn't the best place in the world for a boy, and I'm afraid to have Bill come here. He will be a great deal safer where he is."

Victor saw that argument with Peter would be of no use, and so he did not urge anything further on the subject. He felt sorry for William Close, who was not at all fitted for the rough usage he was likely to meet in the world.

"If his own brother don't care for him," said he to himself, as he parted from Peter, "who is to do so?"

THE DISAPPOINTED FATHER.

CHAPTER VI.

THE circumstances of Mr. Close, instead of improving, grew more and more straitened every day; and earlier than he wished to send his second boy, William, out into the world, he was compelled to take him from school, and look after a place for him as an apprentice to some trade. He wished, particularly, to have him in the same office with Peter—William having expressed a desire to become a printer—for then the boy would have some one to look after and protect him. But he saw that Peter was opposed to this the moment it was mentioned; and when the answer to his letter, desiring him to speak to Mr. Ludlow, came, a suspicion crossed his mind that the boy had not acted fairly.

"I will go to Boston and see about it myself," said he, after thinking over the matter. And he did so immediately. On arriving in the city, he called, first, at the office of Mr. Ludlow. On introducing himself, he inquired if the printer did not want another boy.

"Not just now," replied Mr. Ludlow. "It is only a couple of weeks since I took one."

"Did Peter say any thing to you about his brother?" asked Mr. Close.

"Not a word. I've been looking out for a boy that would suit me for several weeks."

"Did my son know this?"

"Oh, yes."

Mr. Close asked no more questions. He was hurt as well as angry at his boy's conduct.

"Do you wish to see Peter?" inquired Mr. Ludlow. "I will call him down."

"No, not just now," replied Mr. Close. "I can drop in again during the morning." He spoke with an abstracted air. "Do you know of any one who wants a boy?"

Mr. Ludlow reflected for some moments.

"Yes," he then answered. "There is a very clever man, named Edgerton, a watch-maker, who asked me, yesterday, if I knew of any one who had a good boy that would like to learn a trade."

"A watch-maker," said Mr. Close. "Is that a good trade?"

"I believe so. There are not so many at it as there are at the printing; and all seem to be doing very well."

"You know the man?"

"Mr. Edgerton? Oh yes. Very well."

"And you think it would be a good place for a boy?"

"I do."

"Would you have any objection to giving me a little note to Mr. Edgerton?"

"None in the least." And the printer did as requested. Mr. Close took the note and went away without seeing his son. The whole day passed,

and he did not return. On the next morning Mr. Ludlow said to Peter.

"Have you seen your father?"

"No, sir. Where is he?" The boy looked startled.

"Not seen him?" Mr. Ludlow evinced surprise.

"No, sir. When was he here?" inquired Peter.

"Yesterday. Didn't you know that he was desirous of getting a place in a printing office for your brother?"

Peter was stammering out a negative, when he caught himself, on reflection, and admitted that he was aware of the fact.

"You have known, for several weeks, that it was my intention to take another boy."

This Peter was forced to acknowledge.

"Then why didn't you mention your brother."

"Because I was sure he wouldn't suit you," replied Peter.

"Why not?"

"He isn't a very strong boy. I don't believe he could stand a printing office."

"But your father thinks differently. He wished him to learn the trade."

Peter hung his head with a confused, guilty look.

"And, so your father has not been to see you?" said Mr. Ludlow.

"No, sir."

"You must have acted very disobediently to cause him thus to avoid you."

Peter did not answer. A few moments of silence followed; and then Mr. Ludlow told him that he could go to his work. Peter went back into the

printing office, feeling about as badly as ever he had felt in his life.

In the meantime, Mr. Close had called to see the watchmaker, who kept a little shop in Hanover street. The note from Mr. Ludlow who said that he had one of the farmer's boys, was all-sufficient to make the application favorably received. In an hour after entering Mr. Edgerton's shop, Mr. Close started from the city, on his way home, it being all arranged that he should return in a week with William, provided the lad did not object too strongly to the trade of a watchmaker. He felt too indignant towards Peter, and too much disheartened by his strange conduct, to wish to see him while in the city. On the boy's last visit home, he had observed a great difference in him. He had grown coarse and sensual in his appearance, instead of being refined by a city residence. And, moreover, did not appear to care for any one but himself; nor did he take any interest in what was passing at home. His mother's health had failed a good deal; but Peter observed no change. She was sick for a day or two, but he manifested no sympathy. Ere he had been in the house twenty-four hours, he quarreled with William; and his conduct towards both his brothers was so overbearing, that they felt it as a relief when he went back to the city.

All this was remembered by Mr. Close, and it so disturbed him, and aroused, as we have said, such indignant feelings in his mind, that he purposely refrained from going near Peter, as well to rebuke him, as to avoid an interview that could only have been an unpleasant one.

The disappointment to William Close was very great, and, moreover, the lad was hurt at his brother's conduct when he fully understood the part he had acted—not only hurt, but estranged in his feelings. The act was so personal to himself, that his love of self was wounded, and the more he thought of it, the more angry and indignant did he become. Under the influence of this feeling, he decided to accept the place offered him, and learn the trade of a watchmaker. In a week after the return of Mr. Close from the city, he went back with William and placed him in the shop of Mr. Edgerton.

Had Mr. Close been governed by his feelings, he would have returned home without seeing Peter. But his reason condemned this as wrong, and so, after he had seen Mr. Edgerton and left William in his care, he called at the office of Mr. Ludlow. Peter, on seeing his father, had so strong a sense of guilt and self-condemnation, that he could not look him in the face. He was prepared, however, for a severe lecture. In the reception of this, he was disappointed; for Mr. Close did not once refer to his conduct, nor utter a word of reproof. But, he had very little to say, and his coldness and reserve, as well as the gravity of his manner, told the boy but too well what was in his mind.

"Your brother William," said he to him, "I have apprenticed to Mr. Edgerton, the watchmaker. I don't know that it is worth while to ask you to have any care over him. I suppose he can make his own way as you have made yours."

Peter hung his head in silence.

"I shall leave town in an hour," added Mr. Close. "So good bye," and he extended his hand.

The boy took it, but there was no reciprocal pressure—no warmth in either hand. Mutually they turned from each other—the father with a sigh that in no way lightened the pressure of his feelings; the son with a sense of relief.

When evening came, Peter called to see William. Their meeting was not cordial; for on one side was the sense of having, and on the other side that of being, wronged; though no reference was made to the subject. Thus the two brothers went out into the world, without feelings of sympathy in each other's welfare; but, rather tending to estrangement. The want of interest manifested by Peter, took from him the power to influence William for good, even if he had felt a real concern for him. From the beginning, therefore, their ways diverged instead of running in a parallel. On the first Sabbath after William's arrival, Peter started, early, for a ramble with three or four companions, scarcely thinking of his brother, who, suffering from the first sad homesickness, wandered about the streets of a strange city without seeing an object, the sight of which affected him with pleasure; and when evening came, lonelier and still sadder in heart, he went early to bed, thinking only of the home from which he had gone out, and to which he was never more to return, except as a brief visitor, and there wept himself to sleep.

How different was it with Victor and Hartley Stevens, on the first Sabbath after the arrival of the latter in Boston! With what a feeling of pride

and pleasure did the former take his brother with him and introduce him into the Sunday School, and how high a favor did he esteem it, when the Superintendent, at his earnest request, gave Hartley a seat in the class to which he belonged! And yet, in connexion with Hartley's coming to Boston, Victor was to experience a severe trial, and it had been foreshadowing itself in his mind from the first. This had reference to his own intimacy in the family of Mrs. Redmond. The introduction of Hartley to this family might not be pleasant; and, even if they were to receive him kindly, Victor felt that it would be trespassing on good nature to go there with his brother, regularly, every Sabbath evening. But, as to separating himself from Hartley, who would be thus left alone, that, to Victor, was out of the question. He was ready to meet the great privation for the sake of his brother.

After the dismissal of the school, at the close of the first Sabbath, William and Anna Redmond and Victor and Hartley Stevens walked along talking pleasantly together, for three or four blocks. At length Victor and his brother paused at a point where the ways to the two homes diverged.

"What's the matter?" asked William, in surprise.

"We're going home," said Victor.

"Home!"

"Yes."

"No. You're going home with us," returned William.

"Oh yes. You must come; you and your brother too," said Anna, looking with a smile of invitation at Hartley.

"No, I thank you, not this evening," replied Victor. "We must go home."

It was in vain that William and Anna urged. Victor was firm in his resolution. When they at length separated, the brother and sister looked greatly disappointed.

"Why didn't you come with William and Anna?" asked Mrs. Redmond of Victor on the next morning, when the boy called with his bundle of clothes, as usual, for the wash.

"I couldn't leave Hartley alone," was the reply.

"Of course not. But you might have brought your brother along. You must bring him on next Sunday afternoon."

"I don't know that it would be right," said Victor, showing some embarrassment of manner.

"Why not?" asked Mrs. Redmond.

"Because you have been a mother, and your house another home to me," replied Victor, his voice slightly trembling, and his eyes growing dim with moisture; "that is no reason why you should care for my brother in the same way."

The good sense, manliness and right feeling displayed in this answer, filled the mind of Mrs. Redmond with admiration for Victor.

"We will find a place for your brother," was the smiling reply. "He must be a good boy, or you would not feel for him the strong regard you manifest. Bring him home with you on next Sunday evening. I want to see him."

The invitation Victor did not feel it right to decline. And so, on the next Sunday evening, Hartley

was introduced to Mrs. Redmond, who felt a prepossession in his favor as soon as she saw him.

"You must come as usual," said she to Victor, when he was going away that evening.

But Victor did not feel free to do this. It did not seem to him as altogether right. During the week, he debated the subject in his mind, viewing it on every side. When the next Sunday arrived, he had come to this conclusion; to go to Mrs. Redmond's, with Hartley, every other Sunday evening after school; thus making a kind of compromise. And to this he adhered for some time, though not without a certain sense of embarrassment. As for Hartley he was not long in winning his way into the kind feelings of Mrs. Redmond. The quiet unobtrusiveness and sincerity of his character, soon made its due impression; and only a few months elapsed before she felt as much interest in him as she had ever felt in Victor, and before the boy loved her only less than his own mother.

CHAPTER VII.

As Victor Stevens had rightly inferred, he was able to assist and protect his brother in many ways during his trying initiation into the first mysteries of the "black art," and thus lighten the burdens which he, with all his endurance, had found, sometimes, almost intolerable. And in doing this, he was careful not to neglect his own work, nor to

offend any in the office by an injudicious interference in behalf of Hartley. This regard for his younger brother did not, of course, escape the notice of the master, journeymen, and older apprentices, and an involuntary respect for the lads was the consequence; a respect that saved them often from oppression. Thus, in the beginning, they experienced the benefits of concord, and proved the truth of that saying, so apparent to all—"In union there is strength." In pulling together, the draught was made easier. In mutual regard, the burdens they had to bear were found to be lighter than if each had attempted to work alone in selfish regard to his own ends and pleasures.

It was different, of course, with the two brothers, Peter and William Close. For the former, no respect was felt in the office where he worked, for there was nothing about him that inspired respect; and he was constantly suffering some kind of annoyance, arising from a reaction occasioned by his own hard points of character. As for William, the poor lad had a hard time of it. The separation from home proved a most painful trial; the more so, as, in the family of the watchmaker, where he lived, he found neither sympathy nor companionship. There was one other apprentice, a boy of nineteen years old, who, from the beginning, showed an evil pleasure in oppressing and annoying the friendless lad; and, as William's feelings were naturally acute, he suffered from this cause severely. For the first year he was made a family drudge. He cut the wood, made the fire, brought the water, cleaned knives, carried the market basket, nursed the baby,

and, sometimes, was even set to washing windows and scrubbing floors. If he complained to Peter of any thing, he received no sympathy; and no advice, except when he told him of what the older boy did to him, and then he was instigated to antagonism.

"Knock him down with the first thing that comes in your way," was the counsel of the elder brother. But this counsel William had not the courage to follow. With nothing at home to attract him there; and no good influences to inseminate and develop right principles as a protection in the world, William, after a few weeks residence in the city, began to look around him for some one or more with whom he could have fellowship. Companions were not hard to find. A friendship with two or three boys in the immediate neighborhood was soon formed, and it so happened that they were able to induct him into all the little vices peculiar to a city life. William was not a very apt scholar at first. He came from the country an innocent-minded lad, and only needed to have his feet turned into right paths. He would have walked in them willingly. But there was no one to point the way; no one to take him by the hand and lead him in the right direction. Had Peter, as the oldest, been a different boy, life would have opened for him with a better promise. His first associates determined his future. They were about as bad as they could well be. He not only learned from them to break the Sabbath, and lounge about the theatre at night, but to frequent tippling shops where the vilest people congregate. In order to get money, old nails and scraps of iron were gathered, and, when opportunity offered, the

temptation to purloin little things was not resisted. This was a dreadful school for a lad to enter. All that was good and innocent in the mind of William Close, shrunk from the first contact with this; but little by little the weak foundations of right principles were destroyed, and, before he had been six months in Boston, his willing feet were moving swiftly in the way to destruction.

Two years after William had been sent to Boston, Mr. Close received a letter from his master to the effect, that his son's habits had become so bad as seriously to incline him to make an application for the cancelling of his indentures. "He runs," said the letter, "with the fire engines, and associates with fire rowdies, and the very worst class of boys in the city. Often he stays out all night. He visits tippling shops and the theatre, and what is strangest of all, never seems to be without money to spend. Where he gets it from is more than I can tell. Talking to him does no good. Punishment avails as little. I have tried both. In the family, he is either sulky or impudent; and is never satisfied with any thing. Unless there is a speedy change for the better, I must give him up as incorrigible. I am sorry to write this; but justice to all concerned makes it imperative."

The mother of William had not been in good health for some years. Disease had fastened upon her lungs, and under its encroachment, she was gradually but surely wasting away. Daily some portion of her strength departed; her pulse became feebler; her step slower; and her face whiter and sadder. Since her two oldest boys had left home,

her heart had been weighed down by a new feeling of trouble, for she had little rational confidence in them. If they loved her, they had never manifested, strongly, their affection. Her counsels, when opposed to their passions and inclinations, never had much apparent weight. Neither love nor precept, therefore, went with them to guard and guide them on their dangerous way. All this the mother felt; and it was a daily increasing pressure upon her heart. Hopefully she could not look forward. Only with trembling did she let her eyes go fearfully down the future.

Twice a year the boys came up from the city to spend a week at home; but in not one of these visits had the mother's heart found strength. The signs of moral declension were too plainly written in their faces; and their conduct, while at home, was never of a character to make their presence there a source of real pleasure. Hope in her sons, had, therefore, been growing weaker and weaker, and her heart, in consequence, sadder and sadder.

When the letter of Mr. Edgerton came, she was drooping about the house, scarcely able to perform even the smallest domestic labor. In the first impulse of his feelings the excited father read to her the distressing contents. The mother showed little emotion; but the inward shock was terrible. A violent chill seized her soon after, and she went to bed, prostrate both in body and mind. A fever succeeded to this, and when the doctor was summoned, he pronounced her case exceedingly critical. A week of anxious suspense followed: then a dangerous crisis was passed, and the mother began

slowly to recover. But she did not come back even to the low point of health from which she had fallen; and was never afterwards able to sit up more than a few hours in each day. The slightest exertion started the perspiration from every pore; and even a cool breath of summer air gave her cold.

As soon as his wife had passed this crisis, Mr. Close went to Boston to see Mr. Edgerton about William. But his visit, as far as he could see, resulted in no good. The master had a great many complaints to make against the boy, and the boy even more to make against the master. As to the more serious allegations, William boldly denied them. Mr. Close saw, plainly enough, that there was nothing in either Mr. Edgerton or his family calculated to exercise a very salutary influence over a boy; and hardly wondered that his son should have been driven away into evil companionship. After such remonstrance and advice as the occasion seemed to require, Mr. Close went back to his home with a heavy heart. Scarcely a week elapsed after his visit to Boston, when a letter came from Peter, conveying the afflicting intelligence, that William had been detected in pilfering money from his master, who had handed him over to a magistrate, and that he was now in prison.

The heart-broken mother heard this dreadful news with a moan of bitter anguish. In a week they bore her out, and laid her wasted body to rest in the peaceful grave. The unhappy boy, whose conduct had thus snapped asunder a feeble thread of life, never looked upon her face again. Once, in after years, he stood where the green earth was

heaped above her ashes; and stood there with the knowledge that his conduct had hastened and made rough her passage from the earth. What his feelings were we will not attempt to describe. May none who read this history ever know them from actual experience!

CHAPTER VIII.

One day, it was after Hartley Stevens had been nearly two years in Boston, he had occasion to go to the office of Mr. Ludlow, where he met Peter Close. The boys had seen each other occasionally, ever since they had been in the city, but never had any intimate association.

"Where in the world do you keep yourself?" said Peter, on meeting Hartley. "I havn't seen you for an age. What do you do in the evenings?"

"Stay at home and read. Or walk about. Or ——"

"Read! My gracious! I'd go to sleep over a book after standing at case all day."

"We go to Meeting one night in every week—Victor and I."

"Go to Meeting through the week! Why, that's more than I do on Sundays. Boys who have to work as hard as we do, want some freedom and pleasure. Have you been to the theatre yet?"

Hartley shook his head.

"Why not?"

"It isn't a good place for boys."

"Who says so?"

"Father says so. And so does my Sunday school teacher."

"Sunday school teacher! Oh, dear! And so you are a Sunday school scholar into the bargain! Dear! Dear! Dear! Well, that does beat all! Slave like a dog all the week, and then be shut up in a meeting-house and school-room all the day on Sunday, singing hymns and reading the Bible! Well, that beats me out! I can tell you what, my boy, I wouldn't let them coop me up in that way," speaking seriously and in a tone of advice. "Have you had a sail in the harbor yet?"

"No," replied Hartley.

"Why I'm off sailing almost every Sunday. And you've never been to the theatre?"

"No."

"Well, you must go there. Harm! I wonder what more harm there is in seeing Pizarro, Hamlet, or King Lear, than in reading the history or the plays? Can you tell me where it lies?"

Hartley was not, of course, prepared to argue this point. He refrained from going to the theatre more in obedience to his parents' wishes than from any other reason. He had a vague notion of something wrong in the thing itself; but, so far as that went, was not able to give a reason for his conduct. His silence gave Peter confidence in his own positions, and encouraged him to sap, if possible, the foundations of the boy's integrity of character, in at least this matter of obedience to parental injunctions.

"Of course," went on Peter, "there is no more harm in the one than in the other. I wish you would just go once and see and judge for yourself. They are playing Pizarro now. Oh! it is a splendid thing. Such scenery! Such acting! Come round to our house to-night, after supper, and go with me."

But Hartley shook his head positively, and said "No."

"I wish you would," urged Peter. "Just once. I want you to see for yourself. You needn't go any more. It surely can't hurt you to see one play."

"I'll think about it," said Hartley, in whose mind a struggle was already beginning to arise; and as he spoke, he broke away from his tempter and went back to Mr. Preston's office, from whence he had come on an errand.

The words of Peter lingered in the mind of Hartley. As he went home to his dinner, the large bills on the corners attracted his attention more than they had ever done. The word "Pizarro" had for him a new interest, as it stood forth most prominently. He could not pause to read the bills, for Victor was with him; and not for the world would he have had him know what was passing in his mind.

On the next day Hartley was again sent to the office of Mr. Ludlow, where he again met Peter Close.

"Well, Hartley," said Peter, "have you made up your mind to go and see Pizarro?"

Hartley shook his head.

"You still think it harm?" remarked Peter.

"I don't know that there is any great harm in it," replied Hartley. "But my father doesn't wish me to go to the theatre."

"He'll know nothing about it."

"Yes, but I will," said Hartley. "I will know that I disobeyed him."

"Oh dear! And will that keep you awake at night?"

"Perhaps."

"I'd never sleep a wink if such were the case with me. But it isn't because your father believes theatrical performances to be wrong in themselves that he does not wish you to see them. He's afraid of the bad company. But you needn't go into that. You've got sense and discretion enough to go and come without speaking to any one."

This argument had some influence upon the mind of Hartley. Peter then gave him some brief but glowing descriptions of things heard and seen upon the stage, all of which helped to increase an already formed desire to witness a play, and to weaken the boy's good resolutions.

For several days it so happened that Mr. Preston had occasion to send Hartley to the office of Mr. Ludlow, and each time he met Peter, who introduced the subject of the theatre. The consequence was, that the mind of Hartley became so haunted with the idea of seeing a play, that he could hardly sleep when he went to his bed. At length the words "Last night of Pizarro" stared him in the face as he went, one morning, to the office. Peter had filled his mind with a desire to see this particular

play, and this announcement brought his mind into the final struggle in which he was to maintain the integrity of his purposes, or fall away. Of the temptation to which he was subjected, Victor knew nothing; for, to mention it to him would have been equivalent to a settlement of the whole question. And, moreover, he did not wish his brother to know that he had even thought of the theatre with the desire to go there. During the whole day, the question of seeing Pizarro that night disturbed his mind. He was to be alone in the evening, for Victor was going out. The way was, therefore, all open. He was free, so far as external influences were concerned, to gratify the desire he had to see a play, or to act from his convictions of right.

Supper passed, and Victor went out. To go, or not to go—this was the important question that now came up in the mind of Hartley, and called for a quick decision. In half an hour the curtain would rise. He had looked at the bills close enough to be advised of that fact. The more he debated the question, the more confused did his mind become, and the more obscured his perceptions of right.

"I'm sure there is no harm in just going once," said the boy to himself. "What is the harm?"

At last the decision was made by a kind of forced mental effort. Something like a man who takes a leap in the dark, Hartley shut the eyes of his mind to all the suggestions of right, and started forth to visit the theatre. That he did not feel very comfortable may be supposed, for the voice of conscience was not entirely silent. Still, he passed

on, hurriedly, towards the playhouse, and in a few minutes arrived in front of the building, before which large lamps were making all nearly as light as day, and into which a crowd of persons was passing. To pause, now, would have been to enter into a new and more painful struggle. A perception of this was in the boy's thoughts; and, therefore, he kept his mind above reflection; or, rather, chained down below it. Going up, without hesitation, to the ticket office, he paid for a ticket to the pit, and then passed through the door that opened into the avenue leading to that part of the house. The first crash of the orchestral instruments jarred upon his already highly strung nerves as the door closed behind him, and he found himself in a dimly lighted passage way. A sight of the gorgeously painted curtain had not yet made its appeal, even stronger than the music, when, before the eyes of Hartley arose, distinct as if it were a real vision, the forms of his father and mother, and their strict injunctions not to visit the theatre sounded in his ears. He paused suddenly. It seemed as if his parents must know what he was doing and be overwhelmed with grief at his disobedience. With this thought came a strong sense of the evil of disobedience.

"I will not go," said he, with a quickly formed resolution, turning, as he spoke, and hurrying back along the way he had come. When he reached the open air, and ran down the steps of the theatre into the street, he panted like one who had been suddenly brought from an exhausted into a pure and healthy atmosphere. A heavy weight seemed lifted

from his bosom; and with a feeling of thankfulness that he had been able to resist the temptation, he returned home with sober feelings. On arriving there, he found that Victor had unexpectedly come back.

Had Hartley spent the evening at the theatre, he could not have concealed it from his brother without a falsehood, and this it was impossible for him to utter. As it was, he avoided looking him steadily in the face when they met, and was not at all relieved in mind until he found himself in the darkness of his little attic chamber, alone upon his pillow.

It was his first and last temptation, so far as the theatre was concerned.

CHAPTER IX.

After Victor and Hartley had left home, affairs took a rather more favorable turn with Mr. Stevens. A difference of some two hundred dollars in his annual expense soon enabled him to pay off the whole of the mortgage on his little place. This encouraged him. He was next able to conduct his farming operations on a less contracted and exhausting scale. The benefit of this was soon apparent. His fields produced a third more to the acre; his stock was improved in quality and increased in numbers; while every thing around him had the air of thrift and comfort.

About the time Victor attained his eighteenth

year—being then a well-grown boy, taller than some men—he came home with his brother on a short visit. In his round pepper-and-salt jacket, and coarse cassinet trowsers, he did not present a very elegant appearance. But his narrow income would not afford a broadcloth coat. Mr. Stevens pitied his son, when he saw how rapidly he was shooting up to the stature of a man, without being able to dress in any way becoming the appearance of a man.

"I think, Victor," said he to him, a day or two after he came home, "that I must help you a little with your clothes. Thirty dollars is a sum too small to procure you what you really ought to have at your age."

But the boy shook his head, and said—

"No, father. I set out to support myself, and I wish to do it. Only three years more will pass before I am through with my apprenticeship, and then I will be able to buy what I want. I am only a boy now and must be content with a boy's clothing. When I am a man, I can afford to dress as a man. I would much rather you would help Hartley a little. Somehow or other his clothes wear out faster than mine."

Mr. Stevens was touched by the noble independence and brotherly affection of his son.

"It shall be as you wish, Victor," he replied. "I will help Hartley."

And he helped Victor also, although he was not aware of the fact until after he became free. It was done through the kind Mrs. Redmond, to whom Mr. Stevens frequently sent presents of fruit and

other things, the product of his farm, and upon whom he always called when business took him to Boston. In her hands he occasionally placed small sums of money to be expended for the boys, but with the strict injunction that Victor should not be made aware of the fact, so far as himself was concerned.

Not once, from the time Hartley came to the city to be the fellow apprentice and companion of his brother, had there been a jar of discord between them. When not at work, it was rarely that you saw one without the other. They walked out, or remained and read together at home during evenings. They sat beside each other on Sunday in the Sabbath School, or at church. They advised with and helped each other in any difficulties that happened to arise. They were, in fact, united in every thing, and happier, of course, a thousand times happier, than if there had been selfishness, division and discord.

And so the years moved slowly on, bringing nearer and nearer the time when the oldest brother would be free. At twenty Victor was a tall and stout young man. Notwithstanding the little additions secretly made to his income by his father, and notwithstanding that new shirts and stockings came always in time of need from his mother, yet the external appearance of Victor was far from being in correspondence with his age, size, and the associates, which his position as a Sabbath school teacher—to which post he had been appointed when eighteen years of age—drew around him.

Among those who had observed Victor for some years, was a merchant tailor in good circumstances, named Acker, who taught a class in the Sabbath

School to which he was attached. This man had often noticed his plain attire, and pitied him on that account. About the time Victor reached his twentieth year, Mr. Acker said to him, as they were passing from the Sabbath School room one day.

"Call around to see me to-morrow evening. I've something to say to you."

Wondering what Mr. Acker could want with him, Victor called at his shop on Monday evening, and was received with marked kindness of manner.

"How old are you now, Victor?" asked the tailor, soon after the young man came in, breaking off for some common-place observations that were at first made.

"I was twenty last month," replied Victor.

"Then you will be out of your time in a year?"

"Yes, sir."

"You're a printer, I believe?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you like the trade?"

"Oh, yes, very well."

"How much can a good journeyman earn a week?"

"From eight to twelve dollars."

"How much do you expect to earn?"

"Ten dollars, at least."

"That will be very good. You ought to save money on such wages."

"I expect to do so."

"You intend going into business, I suppose, at some time or other?"

"Oh, yes. By the time my brother Hartley is

out of his time, I hope to have money enough saved to buy a small office.

"You desire, then, that he shall be your partner?"

"Yes, sir. We mean to begin the world together. In union there is strength, you know."

"Very true," said Mr. Acker, with a smile of approval.

"How much does Mr. Preston allow you for clothing?" he inquired, a moment afterwards.

"Thirty dollars," replied Victor.

"Too little for a young man of your age."

As Mr. Acker said this, he glanced at the coarse garments of Victor.

"It isn't enough, I know," replied Victor. "But it's all Mr. Preston agreed to pay, and I have no right to expect more. A year will soon pass away, and then I can buy such clothing as I need."

Mr. Acker mused for some time.

"I'll tell you what I've been thinking about," he then said. "You are as large now as a man, and circumstances have brought you into association with young men who all dress much better than you do. Of course, you see and feel this; and it cannot but be mortifying to your feelings. Now, suppose I make you up a good, but not very costly suit of clothes, say for thirty-five dollars, and let you pay me for them after you are free. What do you say to that?"

Victor's face instantly flushed. He felt confused: The desire to have better clothes had been increased by what the tailor said, and here was the offer to have the desire gratified. But then, it came bur-

dened with the idea of debt. He must make a draft upon his future labor.

"Well, what do you say to it?" repeated Mr. Acker, seeing that Victor made no response to the proposition.

"I think I'd better go on as I am," said Victor, in a serious voice.

"Why so?"

"I don't want to go in debt."

"You needn't feel it as a debt. I won't even charge it on my books. You shall be perfectly free to pay when it is most convenient. I'm not afraid to trust you."

Victor shook his head.

"I'm sure my father wouldn't approve of it; and it doesn't seem right to me. I think I'd better 'tough' it out for the year, and take a fair start in the world. I'm sure I would'nt feel comfortable with a fine suit of clothes on my back not paid for; and I know my father wouldn't be pleased to see me wearing them. He has warned me against going in debt for any thing. A young man, says he, who begins the world in debt fifty dollars, will be most likely to remain in debt all his life."

"I don't know but your father is right," said Mr. Acker. "It is bad to go in debt. But isn't he able to assist you a little?"

"He has other children to support, and I prefer taking care of myself. He did offer to help me, but I wasn't willing to accept any thing from him."

"Why not?"

"He supported me until I was fourteen, and gave me my schooling. That was a good deal.

Since that time, I have been able to earn my own living, and it is but right that I should continue to do so. He is getting old, and ought to be laying up something. I wouldn't feel right about it, if I were to touch a dollar of his hard earnings. It won't be long before I'm free. I have stood it so long, and I can easily stand it for another year. For your very kind offer, Mr. Acker, don't think me ungrateful. But, I am sure it would not be right for me to accept it."

"I cannot but admire your manly independence," said Mr. Acker. "Hold fast to this spirit, and your success in life is certain. Yes, debt is a bad thing for a young man to begin the world with. Hundreds have ruined their prospects in life by forestalling their future efforts. It is best, as you say, for you to go as you are. A year will soon roll around, and then you will be prepared to make a fair start in the world. That you will be successful, there is not, in my mind, the shadow of a doubt."

The temptation offered by Mr. Acker was greater than he supposed, and the amount of resistance in the mind of the young man more than was apparent. Victor had, on more than one occasion, been made aware that his coarse clothes stood in the way of his social pleasures. He never walked in the street on Sunday with Anna Redmond, that he did not feel his appearance as being little less than disgraceful to his neatly-dressed companion; and he more frequently avoided accompanying her home from Church or Sabbath school, than he availed himself of the privilege of being in her society.

Several times there had been company at the

house of Mrs. Redmond, but though strongly urged to come, Victor had avoided doing so because his appearance would contrast so strongly with that of others who would be there, as to make him feel uncomfortable.

About a week after the interview with the tailor, just mentioned, Mr. Preston said to Victor, who came into his little office to ask him some question about a work that was in his hands—

"How old are you now?"

"I was twenty last month."

"Nearly a man in age and fully a man in size. You are aware, Victor, that, according to your indentures, you are to be furnished with a new suit of clothes when free?"

Victor replied in the affirmative.

"A good Sunday suit, if you had it now, would not only last you through the balance of your time, but for six months afterward, if you were careful not to abuse it. Suppose I give you the clothes at this time, instead of waiting until you are free?"

"I would feel it as a great favor," replied Victor.

"Very well. You have always been a good and faithful boy, and it will afford me pleasure to anticipate this matter. As you go to dinner, stop in here and I will give you orders for a suit of clothes, a hat and a pair of boots."

Victor thanked his master for this act of kindness, and went back to his work with a pleasant warmth in his bosom, such as he had not for a long time felt.

The order for clothes was upon Mr. Acker, who appeared even more pleased at receiving it than Victor was in placing it in his hands. Victor had his own suspicions touching Mr. Acker's agency in the matter, and he was not far out of the way.

CHAPTER X.

A FEW evenings after Victor had received this reward for his good conduct, he met Peter Close, as he was coming home from his work. Peter had a shabby look and a discontented air. The small sum received for his clothing was injudiciously spent, and, therefore, proved more inadequate to the comfortable supply of things needed than even the income of Victor. The different appearance in the two young men, who were nearly of the same age, was striking enough.

"How are you, Peter?" said Victor, extending his hand.

"Only so so," replied Peter, moodily.

"A'n't you well?"

"Not in mind."

"What's the matter?"

"I feel mad all the time."

"Why so!"

"Just look at me! Here I am, earning Ludlow at least ten dollars every week, and yet the mean rascal keeps me in this condition. He knows as well as I do, that thirty dollars is not half enough to buy clothes for a young man of my age."

"It's all I receive, Peter. And it is all he agreed to give you when you were bound."

"I don't care. I was a mere boy then, and didn't know any thing about what it cost for clothes. But he knew, and took advantage of my ignorance."

"It is not enough, certainly," replied Victor, "but then it does no good to fret over it. In less than a year you will be free."

"A year! I'll be free in less than a week, if there isn't a very great change for the better," said Peter, with an angry emphasis in his tones.

Victor looked astonished.

"The fact is," continued Peter, "he's had enough out of me, and more than enough. I earned as much as he gave me from the first day I entered his office; and for three years I have taken the place of a journeyman. And yet he won't give me decent clothes to my back. There'll have to be a change, I can tell you—a very great change, or he and I will dissolve partnership. I'm determined on that."

"Don't think of such a thing for an instant," said Victor Stevens, in reply. "Put up with any thing rather than leave your place before your time is out. An apprentice boy who leaves his master never does well."

"I can earn ten dollars a week at press in any office in the country. That's well enough for me."

"But the disgrace of leaving your master will follow you wherever you go?"

"Disgrace! I wonder what disgrace there will

be in leaving a selfish, tyrannical old rascal like Ludlow?"

"It is always considered disgraceful for an apprentice to leave his master."

"I know it is, by masters."

"It is by every one."

"I beg your pardon."

"Besides, it is not right," urged Victor. "A contract is as binding, in honor and justice, on a boy, as it is on a man. The agreement was for you to stay with Mr. Ludlow until you were twenty-one years of age; for him to pay your board during the time, and give you thirty dollars with which to clothe yourself. Beyond that, you have no right to expect any thing. So long as Mr. Ludlow performs his part of the contract, you are bound to perform yours."

"I'll take all the consequences of breaking it," said Peter, tossing his head.

"They will, no doubt, prove far more serious than you imagine."

"I'm not afraid. Nothing can be worse than the present. I feel my situation to be intolerable. I have no comfort, and nothing to encourage me."

"I fear," said Victor, "that you have not had the best associates and advisers in the world."

Peter tossed his head half contemptuously, and replied that he believed he was entirely competent to advise himself.

After Victor had urged him strongly not to think of leaving his place until he was free, the two young men separated.

On the next day, while Mr. Ludlow was sitting

at his desk, Peter came to him, and with a certain manner that annoyed the master, said—

"Mr. Ludlow, can't you allow me something more for my clothes?"

"I allow you what I agreed to give when you were bound, and just what the other boys receive."

"It isn't enough," said Peter. "My clothes are so shabby that I'm hardly decent to appear in the street."

"Your own fault, I presume. From the company you keep, I should suppose that over one-half your money was spent for other purposes than clothes."

"It is not so," replied Peter, in a rough, insulting way, eyeing Mr. Ludlow with an angry look.

"See here, young man!" said the printer, rising from his seat, and returning the steady look of his apprentice. "Do you go immediately to the press room, and resume your work, or I'll send for a police officer, and have you flogged."

Peter had seen his master excited more than once during his apprenticeship, and knew that he was not a man to hesitate in an emergency. That he could have him flogged by a police officer for refractory conduct, he well knew, as the thing had been more than once done within his knowledge. A moment's reflection gave him to see that he was in a wrong position. So grinding his teeth with anger, and glancing a look of defiance upon his master, he retreated to the press room and resumed his work.

Mr. Ludlow, on cooling off and reflecting on the subject, came to the conclusion that it would be better, as a matter of prudence, to be more liberal

with Peter in the article of clothing; for if he should be tempted to run away from him, he would lose his labor for a year—labor that would cost him about two hundred dollars, and could not be replaced for less than four or five hundred. He was fretted and annoyed at the boy's insolent manner; but a prudent regard for his own interest led him to stifle his feelings. On his way home to dinner, he stopped at his tailor's and selected a suit of gray cloth for Peter.

"I will send him to get measured this evening," said Mr. Ludlow.

But Peter did not return to the office after dinner; and when Mr. Ludlow sent for him towards sundown, to tell him to go to the tailor's and get measured for a suit of clothes, he heard to his surprise, that he had not been to work during the afternoon. In the evening he called at his boarding house, and learned that he had not been there since breakfast time. Information was given to the police on the next morning, Peter not having returned during the night. But the search for him proved fruitless.

When Peter Close left the office at dinner time, he did not go home, as usual, to his boarding house, but took his way direct to the wharves. At one of these was lying a vessel which had been loading for Charleston, South Carolina, during the week, and with the captain of which, Peter, in lounging about the wharves on Sunday, had become acquainted.

"Got holiday to-day," said the captain, familiarly, as Peter stepped on board.

"Yes, and likely to have it for some time," replied Peter.

"How so?"

"I'm out of my time."

"The deuce you are!"

"Yes, I'm free to-day. And a pretty looking fellow I am to be free. Not a decent shirt to my back!"

"Your master's bound to give you a freedom suit," said the captain.

"And he was bound, also, to keep me decent while I was an apprentice. But he didn't do it."

"You can compel him to give you a freedom suit. Your indentures call for it."

"I've no friends to stand up for me."

"Stand up for yourself. Go to the police-office and make your complaint."

"That's all easy enough to talk about. My master would make his own statement, and tell fifty plausible lies against me. Do you think a poor devil in the plight that I am could get justice? Not here, let me tell you."

"What are you going to do?"

"Get out of the cursed place by the quickest conveyance."

"Can't you get work here?"

"No. Every office is filled with boys. I could name you over twenty journeymen who are walking the streets with their hands in their pockets."

"That's a hard case, certainly. Won't the man you served your time with give you work?"

"No. I quarrelled with him about clothes, and he ordered me out of the office."

The captain, not a very acute observer of human nature, believed all this, and felt compassion for Peter.

"Printers get good wages and plenty of work, in Charleston," said he.

"Do they? I wish I was there, then. But it's no use wishing. I can't tramp that distance."

"I'm short of hands," said the captain, "and will give you a passage, if you will take the place of one on the voyage."

"That I will do most cheerfully, and thank you for the privilege into the bargain," replied Peter. "When do you sail?"

"This afternoon. The clearance has already been made."

"So much the better."

"Get your trunk, then. The wind is fair, and I shall be under way in a couple of hours."

"Trunk! Shelf, you'd better say. I'm yet to be rich enough to own a trunk."

The captain laughed and said—

"Your bundle, then."

"Except rags, I've nothing but what you see on my back," said Peter.

"You are poorly off, sure enough," remarked the captain, "and I don't wonder that you bear no goodwill towards your old master. If it were my case, I should be very much inclined to let him feel the weight of a pair of sledge hammers before turning my back on the city." And the captain held up his huge fists.

"And get in prison for your trouble," said Peter. "No, I've had more to do with the old rascal for

the present than is at all agreeable. In a year or two I will return and settle the matter with him on the ground of equality as a man. The day of reckoning has got to come."

"You are right, no doubt," replied the captain. "Get all fair and square—a good suit of clothes on your back, and money in your pocket, and then haul him up to the bull-ring."

Two hours afterwards, the sails of the vessel were spread to the breeze, and before the next morning the runaway apprentice was out to sea, and beyond the reach of pursuit.

CHAPTER XI.

On his arrival in Charleston, Peter found no difficulty in getting work. In a Boston newspaper he saw himself advertised as a runaway, and a reward of twenty dollars offered for his apprehension. He was described as a coarse, rowdyish looking boy, who kept low company, and would, probably, be found by the police sleeping at night in one of the engine houses. All persons were cautioned not to harbor or employ him under pain of prosecution.

The reading of this advertisement mortified, as well as incensed the young man. The clothes he had on were also particularly described; and as he had no ability to change them, he dreaded being recognized in the office where he worked, hundreds of miles away from Boston as he was. If any one

looked at him earnestly in the street; if a fellow workman questioned him about his former place of residence—if the owner of the printing office observed him more attentively than usual, his heart would beat quicker, and he would feel certain that he was either suspected or recognized. The first week after getting work, he earned eight dollars. Four of this had to be paid for boarding. The cost of living he found to be much higher at the South than it was in Boston. The remaining four dollars would have been spent for a pair of coarse pantaloons, only that the vices of smoking and chewing had to be indulged, and the purchase of tobacco and segars, besides a couple of glasses of liquor, on Saturday evening, reduced his funds to three dollars and a half—too small a sum for his purpose. So the purchase of the pantaloons had to be put off for another week.

Money in Peter's pocket always made him feel uneasy. The fact that he possessed three dollars and a half, and would receive ten dollars on the next Saturday night, made him feel in a certain sense, rich; and privileged, therefore, to gratify any little want he might feel. The consequence was, that by the time the week ended, his three dollars and a half had wasted, how, he could hardly tell, until only two remained. This diminution troubled his mind, and caused him to form a resolution against the indulgence of a spending propensity. A pair of coarse pantaloons and a vest were bought on Saturday night; and the pleasure he felt in putting them on, strengthened his resolution to be careful about his expenditures. By the end of the

next week he was able to supply himself with a new hat and a pair of half boots. The savings of three more weeks enabled him to purchase a coat. After this, pride in his personal appearance being awakened, he expended his earnings in handkerchiefs, shirts, and stockings, of which he was nearly destitute. Then a commoner coat for every day wear, a fine pair of pantaloons and a vest, and a pair of boots were obtained. All this was accomplished in the space of a few months. The change produced in the young man in consequence, was so great, that it is doubtful if his old master would have known him had he met him on the street.

Yet, for all, Peter was far from being comfortable. He was but a runaway apprentice after all, and liable, he felt, at any moment, to be apprehended and sent back to his master. The danger of some printer from Boston getting work in the same office and recognizing him, was constantly before his eyes. He felt uneasy whenever a stranger entered the place. Regularly every Sunday he went round to the different hotels and examined the registers of arrivals to see if any one from Boston, likely to know him, was in the city.

One Sunday, about six months after his entrance into Charleston, and when he had not only supplied himself with a good stock of clothing, but had about thirty dollars in his trunk, he was startled to find the name of Ludlow on the register of one of the hotels. The initials were those of his old master, and the residence given was Boston. Whether this was his master or not, was more than he could tell. But he did not feel it safe to stay an hour longer in

the city than necessity compelled him to remain. That afternoon, without intimating to any one his intention, he started for Mobile; from thence he proceeded to New Orleans, and up the river to Natchez. By this time his money was nearly all gone. At Natchez he could get no work. There were several vacancies in New Orleans, he was told, as the sickly season was about coming on, and printers were leaving. He spoke of Cincinnati; but was discouraged in regard to work there, as a number of printers from the lower country had already gone up.

Having barely enough money to take him back to New Orleans, Peter Close, after reflecting on the chances of his getting sick, and on the probability of Mr. Ludlow's not venturing so far South in the summer time, concluded to run his chances and go down the river.

In New Orleans he obtained work at the first newspaper office where he made application; wages fifteen dollars a week. The price of boarding was five dollars. In four weeks after the young man entered New Orleans, he was down with the yellow fever. The keeper of the boarding house where he lodged, had him sent immediately to the hospital, where he escaped death by only the narrowest chance. On leaving the sick ward, he found himself penniless, friendless, and so feeble that he could scarcely walk alone. As to working, it was entirely out of the question. He could not have stood at the case for five minutes, nor applied sufficient strength to a press to have obtained the impression of a sheet. The deadly fever was still

raging around him, claiming its scores of victims daily. If he were to suffer a relapse, his fate would be sealed. The only thing for him was to escape from the city and flee for his life. But how was he to get away? He had not a dollar, and was a stranger to all in the city. On going to his boarding house for his trunk, he found that it had been opened, and his best clothes removed, under the belief that he would die at the hospital. He never recovered them; for he was in no condition to contend for his rights. In the hope of exciting the sympathy of the person for whom he had worked, he called at his printing office to ask the loan of a sufficient sum to take him up the river as far as Cincinnati; but the man had been taken down with the fever the day after he sickened, and was dead.

The young man was in despair. He had gone back to his boarding house, but his reception, if it could really be called a reception, was such as to make it plain to him that he would not be permitted to remain there. He was not assigned a room, and when at night he asked for one, he was told that the house was full, and, therefore, he could not be accommodated.

"Can't you give me a bed for to-night?" he inquired, in a half imploring voice. Physical exhaustion had broken down his spirits.

With some reluctance he was permitted to sleep in one of the attics; but he was told, at the same time, that he must seek other lodgings on the next day, as he could not and would not be accommodated.

On the following morning, Peter Close made his way to the levee, where he found two boats up for Cincinnati, to sail on that day. Remembering that when he took passage up the river before, he had not been called on to pay his fare until the second or third day, it occurred to his mind that he might get away from the city by going on board of one of these boats. When called on for his passage money, he could explain his situation, and trust to the humanity of the captain for the rest. He could only put him on shore, and that would be an evil less to be dreaded than remaining in the city, where death lurked in the very atmosphere he breathed.

Acting on this resolution, the young man went on board one of the boats about three o'clock in the afternoon, and entered his name for a berth in the cabin. His trunk, which was nearly empty, gave him credit in the eyes of the clerk, as a responsible passenger. At five o'clock the boat got under way, and he saw the spires, cupolas and domes of the Crescent City, gradually receding with a feeling of sincere pleasure. But anxiety soon succeeded to this. He was far from liking the looks of the captain of the boat, and being weak, and therefore unable to protect himself, if difficulties should arise, he began to have fears for the result when it became known that he had regularly entered his name as a cabin passenger for Cincinnati, without having a dollar in his pocket.

On the forenoon of the second day, an intimation was given that passengers were expected to settle the fare. Nearly all on the boat, except such as had already attended to this part of the business,

presented themselves at the clerk's office, according to invitation. Close felt extremely uncomfortable. He debated the question whether it would not be his best policy to anticipate a discovery of his destitute circumstances, by informing the captain of his true position, and endeavoring to excite some feelings of pity in his bosom. With this thought in his mind, he examined the face of that personage attentively, whenever he came into the cabin, or passed him while he was on the guards. But the oftener he looked into his hard countenance, the feebler became his hope of moving his sympathies by a direct appeal. The clerk of the boat was a man apparently of the same stamp of character.

The day went by without any intimation from the officers of the boat that he was expected to settle his fare; but several times he observed the clerk looking at him, and he understood too well the meaning of that look. In the evening, after tea, as Close was sitting on one of the guards, enjoying the cool airs that melted even his forehead, the clerk of the boat approached him and said, in no very bland way—

"What's the number of your berth?"

The number was twenty. But it instantly occurred to Peter that, by saying twenty-five, he might gain a longer time, as, no doubt, the occupant of number twenty-five had paid his fare. He understood perfectly well, why the clerk had asked the question. His decision was made almost as quick as thought.

"Twenty-five," was the unhesitating reply.

"Twenty-five?" the clerk looked at him half doubtingly.

"Didn't I say so?" returned Peter, with some impatience in his manner.

"Yes, you did," replied the clerk, rather rudely, and passed on.

The heart of the young man throbbed quickly and strongly. He had lied to gain a little time, and his lie was, evidently, but half believed. When the truth became known, it would be much worse for him than if he had answered correctly and met the consequences. He understood that fully, and the thought did not add anything to the comfort of his feelings.

Peter Close was nearly the last passenger who retired that night. Number twenty-five went to bed early. The clerk, whose suspicions were aroused, observed this, and Peter saw that he observed it. He passed in and out of the cabin frequently, and never without fixing his eyes upon the suspected passenger. At length the young man became so weak and overwearied that he could sit up no longer; so laying off a portion of his clothes, he crept into his berth. He had not been long there before the clerk came through again, and seeing that he had at length retired, went up to him and said—

"I thought you told me that your berth was twenty-five."

When any one makes the attempt to lie through a difficulty, his mind generally becomes confused. The truth is a very simple thing, a mere question of facts, clearly arranged in the memory, back to which the thoughts can constantly go as clearly

defined landmarks. But a lie, while it needs supporting, has no fixed relation to any thing, and more than ordinary ingenuity is required to make the new lies, which have to be told, in order to sustain the first one that is uttered, to perfectly agree with it as to seem part of a real truth. It rarely happens that a lie is well sustained by its associate lies. The want of a family likeness is generally so apparent as even to force itself on the observation. Lies told to hide an error, to avoid or escape a difficulty, always make matters worse. As in the present case.

"So it is," replied Peter Close to the question of the clerk.

"Why are you not in it, then?" said the clerk.

"Because another man took it in mistake. I did not like to turn him out, as he looked sick, and so waited until all were in bed to get the berth that would be vacant."

"You are going to Cincinnati?"

"I am."

"Be kind enough to hand me your fare. You have neglected to settle it."

"If you will refer to your book you will find that twenty-five has settled."

"I am aware of that. But twenty has not. So just pay over the fare and save yourself trouble. I know the man in twenty-five very well; and remember when he paid his fare. He's about as sick as I am."

Peter felt that the trying moment had come, and that, by falsehood, he had sealed up all the avenues to sympathy in the mind of the captain or

clerk. Some moments elapsed before he replied. He searched in vain for some new expedient by which to gain farther time.

"Come," said the clerk, "be quick. I want your fare."

"I'll settle it in the morning," said Close.

"That won't do. It must be settled to-night."

"You see I'm in bed. I can't run away before morning."

"If you wish to save yourself trouble, my friend," id the clerk, in a cool, but resolute voice, "you will settle your fare immediately. We never permit ourselves to be trifled with on board of this boat by tricks such as you are endeavoring to pass off."

Escape was now impossible. To tell the truth and make an appeal for sympathy, was now the only course left. In a low tone, Peter Close made a full confession to the clerk of his situation, and why he had come on board of the boat.

"It was death to remain," he closed by saying, "and this was my only chance of escape."

"Then you ought to have said so when you came on board of the boat," replied the clerk. "But I do not credit your statement. You have lied in nearly everything else that you have said to-night, and most likely lie in this."

"Be assured," said the young man, humbly, "I tell the truth."

"And be assured," returned the clerk, contemptuously, "that I do not credit a word you say. You've attempted a swindle, and that never goes down on these waters. If you have the money, just hand it over; if not, the quicker you turn and get

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on your riggin' the better. I will be back in two or three minutes."

There was no compromise in the man's voice. For some moments after he retired, Peter lay half paralyzed with confusion and alarm. Then he stepped down from the berth and putting on his coat went out to seek the captain, in the hope of moving him by a strong appeal.

"Ah! here's the man himself," said the clerk, as Peter stepped from the cabin. He was about entering with the captain.

"Well, my fine fellow! have you brought the money to pay for your passage," said the latter, in a half contemptuous, half threatening voice.

"I have no money," replied Peter. His manner was subdued and imploring. "And have already explained to your clerk my situation."

"You've told him a dozen or two abominable falsehoods, as far as I can make it out, and this I suppose is another," said the captain, roughly. "But it all wont do. We have a summary way of dealing with gentlemen of your kidney who attempt a swindle of this kind, which never needs repeating. A few hours acquaintance with cotton wood, bears, snakes, and aligators, if survived, generally cures the passion for playing off tricks on steamboat captains. Are you prepared to settle your passage?"

"Gentlemen! I am without a dollar. I have been sick with the fever; and am now weak as a child. It was my only hope of escape from death."

"Pah!" The captain tossed his head contempt-

nously. "The old beggar woman's story of six starving children and a sick husband at home. William, tell the pilot to bring-her-to at that point just above; and order the hands to get the boats ready."

A full moon, shining down from a cloudless sky, gave distinctness to every object on the river's bank. The point of land mentioned by the captain, was a clay bluff, a hundred feet high, with a shore only a few feet wide at its base. As the Captain gave this direction to the clerk, Peter Close threw his eyes hurriedly towards the land, and shuddered.

"You will not do that, surely?" said he to the Captain. "Remember, that I am a sick man, and if you put me on shore at midnight, where there is no habitation, it will be the death of me."

As Peter said this he made a movement to re-enter the cabin, with the intention of appealing to the passengers for protection. But the Captain stepped quickly between him and the door.

"Let me go in," said Peter.

"No, sir," returned the Captain, resolutely.

"I wish to get something from my berth."

"We'll keep what you've left there to pay your passage and the trouble of landing you."

"I'll cry murder," said Peter.

The Captain instantly collared him with a strong grip.

"One sound from your lips," said he, with an oath, "and I'll pitch you into the river! There! Down with you to the lower deck." And he pushed the unhappy young man towards the stair-way, who, powerless in his grasp, obeyed passively.

"Have his trunk brought down, and anything that may be in his berth," said the Captain to the clerk, who joined them as they reached the lower deck.

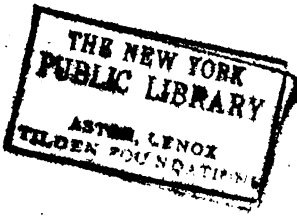
Resistance for one in his circumstances, Peter felt to be hopeless. Another fruitless appeal was made to the Captain and clerk, and then he submitted, passively, and in silence. Opposite the point of land referred to, the steamboat was brought-to. A small boat was dropped into the water, manned by two of the hands. Into this the passenger's trunk was thrown, and he directed to follow. Weak, faint and trembling, the young man obeyed. A few vigorous pulls, and the boat struck upon the shore. His trunk was handed out, but he did not rise from his seat. The fact was, his limbs refused to bear his weight.

"Come!" said one of the men, roughly.

But Peter sat motionless.

"Here, Bill! catch hold of that arm, we'll soon discharge this cargo," he added, seizing hold of the passive young man. In a moment more, Peter Close was pitched from the boat. Staggering forward, he fell upon his trunk.

The boat pushed instantly from the shore. In less than a minute from this time the wheels of the steamer were again in motion, and the shrill sound of the steam, escaping with each revolution, echoing sharply from the neighboring bluffs. In less than five minutes, she swept around a jutting point and disappeared from the eyes of the desolate young man, who had risen up and now sat crouching upon his trunk.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PETER CLOSE LEFT ON THE BANK OF THE MISSISSIPPI. p. 103.

A little while longer, and all was still as death, save the low murmur of the turbid river as it swept on its never ceasing way to the ocean. The air had become chilly with falling dews, and the frame of Peter shivered as the cold struck through his thin garments. At the same time, a dull pain, with heat, was perceptible in his forehead. This pain increased, and flushes of heat began to pass over the surface of his body. A faintness and dizziness succeeded to this. Unable to retain his upright position on the trunk, Peter at length sunk down upon the ground, a few feet from the river's brink.

Delirium soon after succeeded. When next conscious of surrounding objects, he was in the small log cabin of a wood cutter, who had found him on the shore, and lying upon the only bed the comfortless tenement contained. Three days had passed since the closing of his senses. To a physician belonging to a large plantation near at hand, he was indebted for his life. Without prompt medical attendance, it would not have been worth a feather. As it was, the most judicious and constant attention was required, and his recovery was so slow, that nearly three weeks elapsed before he was able to walk about. In the meantime, he had been removed to the house of the overseer on the plantation to which the physician belonged, where he was attended by an old black woman who was assigned the task of nursing him.

On being questioned as to the reason why he had been left on the shore, Peter deemed it best to tell nothing but the truth. But, even his truth was only half credited. It could not be believed that,

for the cause assigned, a sick man would be left upon the shore at midnight. He saw that doubts were felt, and that injurious suspicions as to his real character were entertained. As he grew stronger, all around looked upon him more coldly. The owner of the plantation had shown no interest in him whatever; and the overseer, to whose house he had been removed by request of the physician, evidently felt his presence as unwelcome. So apparent was this to the young man, that as soon as he was able to walk about, and when he felt a portion of his strength returning, he went to the wood cutter who had found him on the shore, and asked his advice as to what he should do, or how he was to get away.

"There's a man, below here, with a keel boat," replied the wood cutter, "who has just buried one of his hands that died of the fever. He's only a boy left, and can't get along with that force. No doubt he'll give you a passage, if you help him to work his way up to Natchez."

"Am I strong enough?" asked Peter.

"You don't look as if you had much muscles left," replied the man. "But I guess you can do something."

Peter went down to see the man who had the boat. Neither party was much prepossessed in favor of the other; however, an agreement was entered into. Peter was to have his passage and meals, and five dollars on his arival at Natchez.

CHAPTER XII.

As to the particular nature of keel-boat service, Peter Close was altogether ignorant. When he informed the overseer, in whose house he had been staying, that he had engaged to work his passage on board a keel boat to Natchez, that personage stared. But he made no objection. He wished to get rid of the young man, and, in his heart, really cared but little how the thing was done.

On the next morning, one of the negroes on the plantation carried Peter's trunk to the river. On parting with the young man, the negro said in a serious voice—

"Never stand dat, no how, massa."

It was a little after sun rise, and the owner of the boat was all ready to renew his upward voyage. Although it was August, a cold fog was winding along the course of the river, leaving its large beads of moisture upon everything in its way. Peter shivered as he descended into this humid stratum of air.

"I expected you half an hour ago," said the owner of the boat, a little impatiently, as the young man handed his almost empty trunk on board. "There, you and Jim take the line, and let's be moving brisk while we've got the cool of the morning."

Jim, the boy, who was about twelve years old,

and who looked as if he'd never had any flesh on his body, was already standing some twenty yards in front, holding a line attached to the boat. The boy stretched the rope taught as this was said, and the new hand, as he obeyed the direction given, had his first correct notion of keel-boat service. But, it was too late to retreat now. He did not wish to go back to his old quarters, where his appearance would have been unwelcome, and he was anxious to reach, at no matter what labor and sacrifice possible to be endured, one of the cities above.

The owner of the little vessel took his station at the helm, and Peter and the boy, with the rope over their shoulders, bent forward and commenced their slow and laborious march along the winding shore, dragging after them a boat, loaded with sugar and groceries, against a current running at the rate of four miles an hour. In a few minutes, the perspiration was starting from every pore of the young man's body, weakened by long and severe illness. Before they had progressed a mile, he was so exhausted that he kept his feet only by support of the rope, against which he bent his body. A little farther, and he sunk to the ground, unable to move another step. The owner of the boat, muttering and swearing in an undertone, jumped upon the shore, and ordering Peter to take his place at the rudder, seized the rope, and prepared to give the little vessel a more vigorous onward movement. The young man crept on board as best he could. Too much exhausted to stand, he was obliged to sit upon a box and lean almost

the entire weight of his body on the tiller, as he gave it the requisite motions to guide the boat.

Another mile was accomplished, and then the party halted for breakfast, which consisted of coffee, pilot bread and salt pork, to which was added a dram of bad whiskey. Peter found himself with a better appetite than he had expected, and his food would have done him good, had he not joined his companions in the bad whiskey. After the meal was concluded, Peter once more took his place at the tiller, and the wearisome journey was again commenced. Soon, however, there was a change in the channel, and another system of navigation had to be adopted. The boat had to be poled up the stream for the distance of half a mile, and then along the shore for a mile farther. Peter was ordered to take a long pole, the weight of which, in his weak state, was more than he could carry without fatigue, to assist in this work. The boy was too small to be of any service here, so he was placed at the helm. The water was deep, and it required nearly the whole length of the long pole to reach the bottom. Taking his place at the bow, the owner of the boat, after telling Peter to follow him, let his pole fall into the water; the end projected only two or three feet above the deck. Bending forwards and downwards until his shoulders rested upon the end of the pole, he commenced walking slowly towards the stern, giving, as he did so, the boat a motion up the stream. Peter understood all this clearly enough, and following the example thus set, let his pole drop to the bottom, and applied his shoulders to the projecting end in a

similar manner. By this time the sun was pouring down its hot and sultry rays upon the heads of the toiling voyagers, and the sick young man felt himself wilting beneath its scorching heat as a leaf plucked from its stem. Two or three times did he walk thus from the bow to the stern of the boat, applying, however, but little strength, for he had scarcely any to give, and aiding, only in appearance, the progressive motion. His total inefficiency was perceived by the owner of the boat, who was about swearing at him for a lazy, shirking vagabond, when the pole of Peter having rested on some yielding inequality at the bottom, gave way as he leaned upon it, and he was projected head foremost into the river. There was a strong current running at the place where this accident occurred, and he was, therefore, swept rapidly down the stream. Too weak, on coming to the surface to struggle even for his life, the young man, after gasping for breath, went under again. The owner of the boat as soon as he had time for reflection, sprung into the water and swam with a few vigorous strokes to the shore. Then starting down the river at full speed, he reached a point at some distance below the place where he had seen the body of the young man rise last to the surface, and waited for its reappearance. In a moment or two it rose within a few feet of the spot on which he stood. Dashing into the water, he grasped a part of the clothing, and dragged the nearly insensible form to the shore. His next care was for his boat, which, with no one on board but the lad, was floating down the stream at the will of the current. Swimming out to this, he directed its

course to the shore, and after fastening it to the land, turned his attention to his half dead companion, muttering as he did so—

"A curse on the fellow! I'm always playing the fool in one way or another."

Some negroes who had seen from a neighboring field the disaster, gave the alarm; and with a white man came running down to the river. They arrived in time to save the boatman any further trouble in regard to the half-drowned man, who was taken up by the negroes, and removed to a house which stood at no great distance from the water. Just then, an upward bound steamboat stopped near where the keel-boat lay, for the purpose of taking in wood. With the captain of this boat, the owner of the keel boat made an agreement to be towed a hundred miles up the river for a certain price; and in less than ten minutes after the body of Peter was borne away by the negroes, he was gliding away at the rate of eight or ten miles an hour. He had forgotten to leave the young man's trunk on the shore.

At the time Peter Close was precipitated into the river, every pore of his body was open, and every muscle exhausted and relaxed. When his nearly extinguished life flowed back again to the cold extremities, he felt stiff, and was sensible of a dull pain in his joints and limbs. Fever soon after appeared; and when, owing to symptoms of serious illness, a doctor was called, he pronounced the attack to be inflammatory rheumatism.

The particulars of what the unhappy young man suffered during the next three months, we will not linger to detail. His home was a negro quarter,

and his attendant a woman called in from the field by the half reluctant owner of the plantation. The pain he suffered, night and day, for a greater part of the time, was terrible. In November, having but partially recovered from the effect of his rheumatism, and with scarcely sufficient clothing to hide his nakedness, Peter obtained a deck passage on board of a steamboat to New Orleans; and, spiritless and disheartened, took his way to that city, in order to seek for work at his trade.

On arriving, he applied at several offices for employment, but his miserable appearance at once suggesting the idea of degraded intemperance, caused his applications to be refused. At length, in despair, he offered to work for his board and clothes. The manner of this offer touched the feelings of the individual to whom it was made, and he agreed to take him on trial, and pay him the usual wages, according to the amount of work he might do.

On attempting to stand at the case, Peter found that, in a little while, his limbs ached so dreadfully, that it was impossible to endure it. On applying for a high stool, and stating the reason, the master printer looked dissatisfied; but, after a little reflection, consented to let him have what he wanted. But even sitting for hours, with the composing-stick in his hand, he found excessively fatiguing, and his arm ached so by night that it seemed as if he could not endure it a moment longer. On the next day, he suffered even more, and on the third day he had to quit work some time during the middle of the afternoon in consequence of pain and exhaustion. On the following morning, however, he was early at

his work again, and kept at it through the day. By the end of the week, his wages amounted to seven dollars, four of which it cost for his boarding.

As he had shown nothing like intemperance during this time, and came steadily to his work, the printer began to have more confidence in him. This was manifest, and Peter felt more comfortable. But he could not get on any faster in the second than he did during the first week. The pain with which he worked was incessant, and often became intolerable. On the third Sunday after his return to New Orleans, he got drenched with rain, while on a little pleasure party with two or three acquaintances he had made at his boarding-house. This gave the disease that still lingered in his system an acute form, and he was in bed nearly the whole of the following week, and under the hands of the doctor.

Thus passed his first three weeks after returning to New Orleans. They present a fair epitome of the whole ensuing winter. Spring found Peter Close but little better off than he was five months before; and when the day arrived that completed his minority, he was lying upon his back, suffering from acute pain—his earnings exhausted, his clothes poor and scanty, and his place at the printing office, to which he had not been able to go for three weeks, filled by another.

It was a sad, instead of a bright and hopeful day, to the suffering young man. How often had he looked forward to the time when he should attain his twenty-first year, his heart bounding with pleasant anticipations! That time had come, but by

his own folly he had destroyed the long expected happiness. There was scarcely a green spot in the year he had just come through—a year of which he had robbed his master, without gaining any advantage to himself; and there was little in the future towards which he could look with hope. The doctor had told him that it was doubtful if he would ever fully recover his health,—that it was certain he would never be a very strong man, and that only by great care of himself would he be able to keep free from the acute attacks from which he had suffered during the winter.

Thus it was with Peter Close on the day he attained his majority. How different with the upright, conscientious, self-denying Victor Stevens.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONTRARY to the expectation of Victor Stevens, on becoming free, Mr. Preston presented him with an order for an entire suit of clothes.

"But I have already received my freedom suit," said Victor, handing back the order. "I am not entitled to this."

"Oh, yes, you are. Good conduct and industry have earned the right. And now, it is but justice for me to say that I have never had a boy in my office, except your brother, who gave me such entire satisfaction. That you will prosper in the future I have not the smallest doubt; for, in your

character are all the elements of prosperity. Continue in my office, as usual, and your wages shall be equal to that of the best journeyman I employ. While I have work, never fear that you will be idle."

That was a proud and happy day in the life of Victor Stevens. For all his self-denial, forbearance under oppression and injury, and long suffering amid many privations, he was fully rewarded. He looked back, not with regret, but with pleasure. Faithful to his early honest and honorable purposes, he was now reaping his first ripe harvest field, in which good seed had sprung up, and under good culture, reached the season of full ear.

In silence, yet with a heart trembling with pleasant emotions, Victor heard the words of approval from the lips of Mr. Preston. He was about turning away, when he paused and said, half hesitatingly as he spoke,—

"I know the office is full now, Mr. Preston, but if you could make room for my brother Thomas."

"Not another printer in the family!" said Mr. Preston, in surprise, smiling as he made the remark.

"Yes," replied the young man. "It is a very good trade, and we all think Thomas had better learn it."

"But, what does he think?"

"Just as we do."

"You all seem to have the happy faculty of thinking alike," said Mr. Preston, smiling again.

"It is a pleasant thing, this family concord—this mutual concern for each other's good. I only

wish we had more of it. And so you would like to get your brother into my office? How does Hartley feel about it?"

"Oh, he would like it very much."

"Well, Victor, I'll think about it. As you said, the office is full. I didn't intend taking another boy just now. But, you and Hartley have proved so faithful as apprentices, that the temptation of another brother is certainly strong. Let me turn over the matter in my thoughts for a day or two, and I will then give you an answer."

The answer, much to the satisfaction of the two older brothers, was favorable, and Thomas Stevens, then fifteen years of age, was taken into the office.

About this time the father of Peter and Wm. Close died. Six months after Peter ran away from his master, William escaped from the House of Refuge; and, up to the day of his death, not a word of intelligence respecting either of them found its way to Mr. Close. Their conduct planted his pillow with thorns, and made wretched the last days of his troublesome life. Frank, his youngest son, was thirteen when this sad event occurred. The two boys who had gone to Boston, turned out so badly, that Mr. Close had determined to keep Frank at home and raise him on the farm. But his death left the boy without a real friend. A brother of Mr. Close, who administered on the estate, and assumed the guardianship of Frank, sold the little farm and cottage and paid off the debts. After this was done, he said that nothing remained—the debts having consumed the entire proceeds of the sale. No one, however, believed this. But, as Mr.

Edward Close was pretty well off in the world, nobody cared to interfere in the matter. Six months after his father's death, Frank was bound an apprentice in the city of Boston, to learn the trade of a hatter. Thus his uncle got rid of him. Without a friend to look after or to counsel him, the poor boy was subjected to every species of hardship. He had the example of running away, set by his oldest brother, before him, and, at the age of eighteen, following that example, left the service of his master. Sixpence and an old hat were offered as a reward for his apprehension!

A year before Hartley Stevens was free, he discovered, by some accident, that there was a flaw in the indenture by which he was bound to serve Mr. Preston until he was twenty-one years of age. He mentioned it, incidentally, to one of the journeymen in the office, who advised him by all means to accept the advantage which the discovery offered.

"And leave my place?" inquired Hartley, with a flushing cheek.

"Certainly. Preston has no legal claim on you. A year is a good while. You can lay up a hundred or two dollars in that time, if you're prudent."

"Did you imagine that I would do so dishonorable a thing?" said Hartley, indignantly.

"Oh, just as you please," returned the man, with a sneering air. "If you're fool enough to stay when the law will let you go clear, stay. It's no loss to me."

"Nothing is ever really gained by a dishonest action," said Hartley, firmly. "I shall, therefore, seek for no good in that course of life. As for my

indentures, I have never felt bound by them—I never think of them. I gave my word to remain with Mr. Preston until I was twenty-one years of age, and, if there had been no binding in the case, it would have been all the same to me. I wouldn't give much for either man or boy, who only acted right because legally bound to do so."

The journeyman made a profane angry reply to this, when Hartley turned from him with a proud consciousness of being able to act justly towards others from a principle of rectitude.

It so happened, that a part of this conversation was overheard by the foreman of the office, who felt it his duty to inform Mr. Preston of the occurrence, particularly as to the bad advice offered by the journeyman. Mr. Preston felt justly indignant at the latter; and immediately sending for him, paid him the wages that were due, and requested him to leave the establishment forthwith.

On the next day, when Hartley came into his counting-room, to ask some question about work, Mr. Preston said—

"I understand that you have discovered a flaw in your indentures."

"I merely mentioned it," replied Hartley, feeling hurt at the intimation, and showing that such was the case; "but I have not had the most remote intention of taking advantage of the fact."

"I have, myself, been aware for some time of the existence of this flaw," said Mr. Preston. "You were not legally bound, and, I have, therefore, no right to hold you. Perhaps I have done wrong in letting you remain under the impression

that you were under a legal obligation to give me your services until you were twenty-one years of age."

"I am sorry," was the reply of Hartley to this, evincing a good deal of feeling as he spoke, "that you think so poorly of me, as to suppose that I would do a thing clearly wrong in itself to gain a temporary good. My father apprenticed me to you until I was twenty-one, and I assented to the contract. Since that time, I have not thought about being bound by the law. I came to you in good faith, and will remain in your service until I am a man."

"Just the sentiments I expected to hear you utter, Hartley," replied Mr. Preston to this, his whole manner changing. "No—no. I have not misunderstood you—I have not thought so poorly of you. I would have been greatly surprised and disappointed indeed, if any son of Mr. Stevens had proved so lost to honor and conscience as to take advantage of such an opportunity as now offers itself. I shall, with pleasure, communicate the fact to your father. It will do him good to hear it."

Hartley went back to his work with feelings that might well be envied. The happiness which comes as the reward of conscious rectitude, is among the purest and most delightful emotions that the human mind experiences. How blind and foolish are they who rob themselves of this delight in their selfish efforts to attain some coveted good at the expense of honor and virtue! To an act of this latter kind always

succeeds disappointment, pain and regret. The result is as certain as that effect follows cause.

The last year of Hartley's apprenticeship soon passed away, and he, too, stood among his fellow-men as a man, responsible to society and to heaven for every act he might perform.

CHAPTER XIV.

Two years after Hartley was free, the young men determined to make their long purposed start in the world, as master-printers. Victor, in the five years he had been doing journeywork, had saved six hundred dollars, and Hartley, in two years, had saved three hundred. With this money they furnished a small office, and opened it for work. No articles of co-partnership were drawn up; no stipulation in regard to a division of profits made. They commenced business as one man, and their joint interest was felt to be a unit rather than a duality.

The prospects of the two young men, for some time after opening their office, were by no means flattering. It was a dull year for business, and few of the old-established offices were fully employed. Victor, whose organ of hope had not become so largely developed as that of Hartley, finding weeks and months running away without bringing them any thing more than a few odd jobs, the whole receipts from which did not pay their boarding and

rent, began to grow disheartened; but Hartley always spoke encouragingly.

"Never fear but what our time will come," he would say, when Victor desponded. "Every thing must have a beginning. The largest river in the world may be traced back to an insignificant rivu let."

"But we are not making our expenses," objects Victor.

"Remember, six months have not elapsed yet, and we didn't calculate to pay expenses in less than six months. There is a small perceptible increase, and that promises every thing," replies the confident brother.

Six months go by, and still the experiment fails to pay, although everything in the office is done by the brothers, with the aid of a small boy. Even Hartley begins to feel serious, though he is far from despondency. An obstruction in his way but quickened his thoughts, and made them active about the means of overcoming the difficulty. There was a certain book of moral precepts which had fallen into the hands of Hartley some years before, and with which he was much pleased and benefitted. Wishing to possess it for a certain purpose, he inquired for it at one or two of the bookstores, with the intention of buying it, but was unable to find a copy.

"It has been out of print these two years," said one of the booksellers, to whom he applied. "I don't think you will find a copy in Boston."

Hartley thought about this after leaving the store of the bookseller, and it occurred to him that it

would be a good book to print. For a day or two his mind kept reverting to this; and then he went back to the bookseller and suggested the publication of the volume, at the same time offering to print it. The bookseller at first shook his head; then, after reflection, he said he would think about it, and told Hartley to call in a few days, and if he concluded to get out the book, he should have the printing.

The decision in the mind of the bookseller was favorable. He determined to print the work, and on the very next day sent for Hartley, and engaged to have it done. With what a hopeful, happy spirit, did the two brothers commence setting the types on this, their first important job! After getting up a form, Victor worked it off on the press, while Hartley continued at the case. The edition was twelve hundred copies. In the course of four or five weeks, the sheets, accurately and beautifully printed, and pressed as smooth as glass, were delivered to the bookseller, who expressed himself as very much pleased with the style of workmanship displayed, and said that when he had anything more to do they should certainly have the work. Several small pamphlets came in after this, and they were busy for the next few weeks. Then it was dull again. In the midst of this dull time, a man came in and asked them if they could print large show bills. Hartley replied that they would print anything. If they had not the letter wanted, they would provide themselves with it.

"My printing is of some consequence," said the man. "I havn't been treated well at the office where it is now done, and am going to take it some-

where else. My bills are never less than fifty dollars a week."

"What kind of bills are they?" inquired Hartley.

"Theatre bills," replied the man.

"How many do you have done?"

"Two hundred large posters, and from three to eight hundred small bills every day. It's a good job for any office, and for young beginners, as you are, will be just the dandy. Of course you will have free admission for all in your office. The work, however, must be done at a pretty low figure, though not so low but that you will make a handsome profit."

Hartley told the man that he would talk with his brother about it, and give him an answer during the day. When the matter was first mentioned to Victor, he was a good deal elated.

"It's the very thing," said he. "I wouldn't ask a better start than the printing for a theatre."

Hartley did not respond to this very cordially. His countenance, instead of showing an elevated expression, was rather more serious than usual.

"It's a good chance, I know," he remarked, after musing for some time, "but my mind isn't so clear that we ought to have anything to do with the business."

"We don't approve of the theatre, of course," was Victor's reply to this. "But, our printing the bills as a simple mechanical operation, doesn't in any way involve us in the responsibility of the matter, nor commit us in favor of what we don't approve. Were we to make our own full approval of

everything offered to us as printers the rule in regard to accepting work, we would soon be compelled to close our office. I'm very sure that I am far from assenting to the doctrines taught in the pamphlet we printed for Williams. But, the writer and publisher are responsible to society, not we who merely set the types and print the paper. No painter, who stood in need of work, would refuse to execute a piece of scenery for the stage because he did not approve of theatric representations; nor would a tailor, refuse, on the same ground, to make a particular costume for an actor."

"So far as that is concerned," said Hartley, "every man must be left free to do as his own sense of right dictates. To the mere printing of the bills, viewed as a simple mechanical operation, I have no objection. But, the fact is, Victor, I don't like the idea of having any kind of association with these men as a class. If we print for them, we will have some of them running in and out here every day. Our apprentice will see and read the bills we print; and not only this, but will have to carry them to the theatre, where he will meet those connected therewith and be invited to come and see the performances. The man who was here said that all in the office would be entitled to free admission. I hardly think it right for us to subject him to such a temptation. Moreover, if work comes in freely, we must take another boy soon, and he will be open to the same evil influences. The fact is, brother Victor, if we are going to have anything to do with printing for the theatre, we may as well

give up, at once, all idea of caring for the moral well-being of those under our charge as apprentices."

"I didn't think of that," was Victor's reply. "If there is the danger you apprehend—and I am inclined to think your fears well grounded—let us by no means touch the work. Far better for us to close our office and go back to our old position as journeymen."

"Just my own view. And now for our decision. Shall we or shall we not decline this work?"

Victor hesitated for some moments before replying.

"I think we had better decline it," he at length said, in a slightly depressed tone.

"So do I," was more cheerfully responded by Hartley. "And rely upon it, this seeming loss in the present will be a great gain in the future. Who can touch pitch and not be defiled? To a moral certainty, if we had taken this theatre printing it would have been the means of introducing trouble into our office."

When the Manager of the theatre came for a decision on his application, it was in the negative. He did not seem to be very well pleased, particularly as the young men resorted to none of the too customary business subterfuges used in such cases, but simply gave as a reason, that they would prefer not doing the work.

Six months after this, and at a time when Victor and Hartley Stevens had as much work as they could do, they were told that a young man who went into business a year before they did had failed. On inquiring as to the cause, it was replied—

"He was ruined by the theatre printing."

"How so?" was inquired.

"The manager lost money by the season, and couldn't pay his bills."

"How much did he owe the printer?"

"Nearly three hundred dollars. He had borrowed the money on which he commenced business, and the man who loaned it, seeing that he was losing at this rate, sold him out to save himself."

"Nothing is ever lost," said Hartley to his brother, when they were alone, "by acting from a principle of right. If we had looked only at the money, and cared nothing for the welfare of those who might be employed in our office, we could have secured that printing. But see what would have been the result."

After they had declined working for the theatre, the brothers got nothing to do of any importance for two or three months, not making their expenses during the time. They often felt gloomy and anxious, but strove manfully to repress all such emotions, and to look forward hopefully. Not once did either of them regret having declined an offer that promised so well. The act, upon reflection, met their heartiest approval.

Work began to flow in again after this dull season. They got a large book to print, which occupied them several months, and upon which they made a very good profit, lighter jobs having, in the meanwhile paid all their expenses. From this time they experienced more steady, favoring breezes.

Three years went by, with its ups and downs, its seasons of encouragement and discouragement, and

the two brothers found themselves with about three hundred dollars in money saved from work, besides an office much increased in value beyond its original standard. With this money, after carefully considering the matter, they determined to print a certain book, of which there were no copies in the market, and sell the whole edition, when ready, to some publisher, or, in default of finding any one willing to take it off of their hands, to publish it themselves and wait until it went off under the regular demand that might arise. The latter expedient they found necessary, and the book appeared. Its typography was good, considering the state of the art at the time, and as they distributed it freely to editors in the larger cities, it received such favorable notices from the press, as to induce booksellers to order it freely. In less than a year, not a copy of the edition remained on their hands. In the meantime they had issued another book, which met with a like good reception, and were now engaged upon a third. But in these operations it was a fixed rule not to incur debt, nor attempt to go faster than healthy openings in the market warranted. The system of driving business to an extent involving danger, was not a part of their policy. Their motto was—"No such word as fail!" and, therefore, no step was taken without prudence and forethought. This was the secret of their safe progression.

CHAPTER XV.

After Thomas became free, he continued in the employment of his old master, earning good wages, and spending no money that was not required to meet his ordinary wants. He had been out of his time three years, and had saved up a few hundred dollars, when his father, whose circumstances had yearly improved, said to him, on the occasion of a visit to the old homestead—

"How much money have you laid by, my son?"

"Five hundred dollars," replied Thomas.

"Five hundred. That is doing very well. Isn't it's most time for you to think of making a start for yourself? Victor and Hartley are doing very well. It was dull with them at first, as it is with all new beginners; and it will be dull with you for a season. You are now twenty-four, and by the time you are twenty-six you ought to be fairly under way. How much will an office large enough to do a pretty fair range of work cost?"

"The office of Victor and Hartley cost nine hundred at the beginning."

"Was it large enough?"

"Oh, yes. But I have only five hundred."

"No matter. I can help you a little."

Thomas did not appear as much gratified by this offer as Mr. Stevens had expected.

"I hardly know what to say," replied the young man, in evident perplexity of mind.

"What is in the way?" inquired the father. "Are you timid about the matter?"

"Oh, no. I am not in doubt as to the result. I know very well that I shall succeed, whenever I go into business."

"Then why not go now? The way is open. I can spare you three or four hundred dollars without feeling it; or even more, if necessary."

"The fact is, father," said Thomas, in reply to this—"There is but one objection, and that troubles me whenever I think of it. If my trade were any other than that of a printer, I would not hesitate a moment. But my brothers are only now beginning to do well, and I cannot bear the thought of seeming to enter into rivalry with them. If I established an office, some work that would, otherwise, go to them, will come to me; and it might create an unpleasant feeling. I know of just such work. There is one bookseller who superintends the Sabbath School in which I am teacher, who has said to me that whenever I went into business, I might calculate on a good share of his work; and it all goes now to the office of Victor and Hartley."

"There is something in that," replied Mr. Stevens, thoughtfully. "Still you are a man, and the world is wide enough for you all. You cannot forego seeking your own temporal well-being in a right and orderly way, for fear that doing so will interfere with your brothers. I am certain that neither Victor nor Hartley will feel unkindly about

it. In fact they would have no right to do so. They went into business, and you have the same privilege."

Thomas assented to all this; and yet his mind remained in doubt. He shrunk back from "the very appearance of evil."

"Suppose you talk with them about it?" suggested Mr. Stevens.

"They would, of course, give their consent, no matter how they might feel," replied Thomas, "and that wouldn't, in the least, take away my objection."

"Oh no, my son. They are not so unreasonable as all that. Their own good sense and good feeling would produce better impressions. My own opinion is, that the fact of your speaking to them on the subject, will make all as plain before you as you can desire. They will see what is in your mind, and appreciate the delicacy and goodwill that prompts you to speak of it."

On reflection, Thomas concluded to act upon his father's advice. On returning to the city, he went to his brother's office. He found Victor alone, and introduced the subject by saying, without any preliminaries, whatever—

"Brother Victor, I have five hundred dollars laid up, and father says, that if I wish to go into business, he will lend me as much more as will be wanted to furnish a small office."

Victor looked more pleased than surprised at this.

"And so you wish to go into business?" said he.

"I have been saving my money for that purpose," replied Thomas. "I don't want to be a journeyman all my life."

"Of course not. There are plenty who are content to plod along; plenty who are thriftless and idle; plenty who had rather spend their money in useless self-indulgence, than save it for the purpose of going into business and rising in the world. There is room enough for the industrious and enterprising, Thomas."

"So I think," replied the brother. "But, there is one thing about the matter that rather troubles my mind. I spoke to father about it, and he said I'd better mention it to you."

"Well, what is it, Thomas?"

"The fear that my going into business might appear like rivalry to you. Some work that you now get, I may receive. I have no wish to tear you down in the effort to build myself up."

"We know that, Thomas," replied Victor. "Were you to take an office next door to us, we should not have even the imagination of such a thing."

"How do you think Hartley will feel about it?" asked Thomas.

"Come round to-morrow and I will answer that question," said Victor smiling.

In the morning Thomas came round.

"Have you talked with brother Hartley?" he inquired.

"I have," said Victor.

"What does he say?"

"He doesn't like the idea of your going into business," replied Victor, gravely.

The countenance of Thomas fell.

"He thinks," continued Victor, "that it would be much better for all concerned, if you would put what money you have into our business, and go in as a partner. And I think so, too. In union there is strength, Thomas."

The cloud which came over the young man's countenance was instantly dispersed, and a gleam of light flashed over it.

"I did not expect this," said he, with manifest satisfaction.

"Though we have thought and spoke of it often," replied Victor. "We are willing to work, and can mutually trust each other. That is a great deal. Our business is rapidly on the increase, and we want all the intelligent and interested assistance you can bring. Your money will enable us to get out a new book, which we have just received from England, upon which we shall clear a handsome profit, and your aid in the business will enable us to turn more attention to publishing, to which, in a few years, we will no doubt find it our interest to entirely limit ourselves. The profit, you know, is double. We get returns both as printers and publishers."

"When shall this arrangement go into effect?" said Thomas, after expressing, warmly, his delight at the unexpected proposition.

"Immediately," replied Victor

"I'll finish my week's work, and join you on Monday."

"That will do. The book I spoke of, we will put in hand, and hurry it quickly through the press."

"If you wish to use the five hundred dollars before Monday," said Thomas, "I will give you a check for it now."

"No, we have a couple of hundred dollars in bank. That money we will reserve to pay for the paper and binding."

On Monday, as agreed upon, Thomas Stevens joined his brothers in business.

It would be difficult to say which of the three brothers was most pleased by this arrangement. Thomas showed his gratification more, because he was younger, and the event was so unexpected; but the pleasure he felt was no deeper, nor more real, than that experienced by the two elder brothers.

The book, which the money of Thomas enabled the firm to get out, was a large and costly volume; but it was the new work of a popular author and met a rapid sale. The first edition of fifteen hundred copies, on which they made a large profit, was exhausted in three months, and a new edition demanded. An edition of two thousand copies was then passed through the press, which was all gone in less than a twelve-month. Six other books were published during the year, on all of which good profits were made.

From that time the increase of business was rapid. A credit with paper makers, binders, and others, to any amount they desired, was open to the brothers, and this enabled them to avail themselves of every good opportunity that offered for getting up books, that promised to have a fair run in the market, and to wait for a return of sales.

Three years more of prosperity determined the brothers to make a change in their business. Up to this time they had confined themselves to mere printing and publishing. They now took into serious consideration the establishment of a retail trade in Boston, and finally determined to do so. A handsome store was taken on Washington street, and the entire branch of business placed in the hands of Hartley Stevens, as the one acknowledged to be most competent for its management. From this time book selling, as well as printing and publishing, made a part of the operations of the firm. In order to secure the most perfect efficiency in every branch, Victor had charge of the publishing department, Hartley of the store, and Thomas of the printing operations; and each, by daily conference, was kept fully acquainted with the general state of all the other branches of business. Thus, while each worked in his own department, he saw, all the while, the harmony of his efforts with the rest, and how the whole establishment was moving on as if conducted by a single mind. Such a thing as jarring was not known in any part of this beautifully working machinery. Mutual confidence, mutual interests, and a mutual deference of opinion, formed a bond of union, and made three men act as one.

Turning from this picture of brotherly concord and success, let us, for a brief period, contemplate one of an opposite character.

CHAPTER XVI.

As the sickly season approached, in the summer following the period when Peter Close attained the age of twenty-one years, the young man, with scanty clothing, poor health, and but little money in his pocket, started up the river for Cincinnati. The news of his father's death, which had reached him, added to the trouble, pain, and disappointment he had suffered since the ill-advised step of leaving his master had been taken, and tended greatly to sober his feelings. He made serious resolutions in regard to the future; determining to keep himself free from all idle and dissolute company, and to make an effort to get something ahead.

On arriving in Cincinnati, he was so fortunate as to obtain immediate employment in the office of a morning paper. But, he found the work exceedingly trying on his weakened body. Loss of rest and prolonged labor exhausted him so much, that it was with difficulty he could sometimes stand at the case. He persevered, however, for a few months, when an opening occurred in a book office, which he gladly accepted. Here he found permanent work, and made very good wages. By the end of a year, his health was greatly improved, he had a good stock of clothes, and nearly a hundred dollars laid by. During his residence in Cincinnati he had become familiar with the progress of things in the

West, and understood something of the advantage a few hundred dollars would be to a young man, if possessed just at the right moment, to enable him to secure some clearly-seen advantage. All around him were struggling in the effort to accumulate property, and he became inspired with the same feeling. Almost daily was rehearsed in his ears the story of some one, who, not worth a dollar five years before, was now gathering in money by thousands; and such incidents only inflamed the desire he felt to become better off in the world.

Of his brothers, Peter Close knew nothing. He had not heard of the escape of William from the House of Refuge, nor of the disposition of Francis after the death of his father. William's conduct had been so disgraceful, that he pushed aside his image whenever it crossed his mind; and, as for Francis, though he thought of him occasionally, it was with no disposition to make any sacrifices, nor to give himself any trouble on his account. Francis was quite as old as he was when he went from home, and, no doubt, fully as able to take care of himself. Nobody had ever helped him.

Thus, narrowing down all his views in life to himself, Peter Close continued to work on and save his money, with a view of entering into business at the earliest fitting opportunity.

One Sunday, it was after he had been in Cincinnati about two years, and when he had saved over two hundred dollars, Peter was strolling along by the river, looking at the steamboats and the people, when, most unexpectedly, he encountered his brother William. Both started in surprise. William

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MEETING OF PETER CLOSE AND HIS BROTHER. p. 137.

was first to extend his hand, which Peter could not but grasp and shake. They looked earnestly at each other, while the blood mounted to their faces.

"This is very unexpected," said Peter, speaking first, though not in a voice of real pleasure.

"I am sure it is to me," replied William. "I thought you were in Boston."

"No; I've been in Cincinnati over a year."

"You have! It's strange we have not met before. have been here over a dozen times during that riod."

The appearance of the two brothers presented a strong contrast. Peter was well dressed, and had a genteel air; but William was coarse and rough both in his features and garments.

"What are you doing?" inquired Peter.

"Trading on the river," replied William. "And are you still at printing?"

"Yes; I'm at the types yet for want of a better business."

The brothers had been standing on the pavement during this brief interview. Peter now said—

"Come! Let us go on board of one of these boats, where we will be more to ourselves."

The two young men went down to the river, and going on to one of the steamers, took a seat on the guards where they could be alone.

"When did you hear from home?" asked William.

"I have not heard for some time," replied Peter. "I suppose you know of father's death?"

"Father dead!" exclaimed William, evincing

both surprise and emotion. "Is it possible! I had no idea of that."

"Oh yes," was calmly answered. "He has been dead for two years and more."

"Bless me! I thought he was still living.—And Frank—what of him?"

Peter shook his head.

"Hav'n't you heard from him?"

"No."

"That's strange."

"So it is. But I've not been home, and no one has written me a word."

"Then you don't know what has become of the old place? Father must have left some property when he died."

"Not much, I fancy. He let things go so sadly to wreck and ruin towards the end. But no matter what he left, uncle Ned has taken good care of it, I'll warrant."

"Though not for our benefit."

"Oh, no. He has no weaknesses of that kind.—Whatever goes into his hands, stays there. I only hope he's taken proper care of Frank."

"I'll warrant he's pushed him adrift long ago.—He's one of the most selfish, heartless men I ever knew. At least, that is my reading of his character. I wouldn't trust him alone in the room with his dead grandmother, if there were half dollars on her eyes to keep them closed."

"Your judgment does not wrong him very greatly I presume," replied Peter. "But let him go his ways. I never wish to see him."

"I would like to hear from Frank," said William,

with some interest in his manner. "I hope he has not been sent into the city. It's a dreadful place for an unprotected boy—dreadful! dreadful!"

"Though thousands have to take their chance there as we did."

"And such a chance!" said William, half shuddering, as his mind too vividly sketched some pictures of the past. "Such a chance! Alone, amid temptations on every hand, and driven into evil by wrong treatment—what hope is there for a boy? It is small; very small."

"It is a bad place, I know," responded Peter, realizing in some sense the perceptions of his brother's mind.

"Heaven help Frank, if he be in it!" said William, with much apparent feeling.

A silence of some moments followed, during which time the thoughts of neither of the brothers were of the most pleasant kind.

"How long do you remain here?" asked Peter.

"I'm not certain," replied William. "We came down from Portsmouth with a load of flour, which we want to sell here; and then take in pork, bacon and lard for New Orleans. It may be two or three weeks before we move down the river."

"You're on a flat boat?"

"Yes."

"Any interest in it?"

"Yes; I own a small share of both the boat and cargo. I manage to make a little every time I go down the river, and thus increase my interest in the business."

"What is your interest now worth?"

"About three hundred dollars."

"Indeed." Peter felt a certain respect for his brother, not previously entertained, forming itself in his mind.

"How long has it taken you to accumulate this?"

"About a year. But in my next trip down the river I hope to double it."

"You do?"

"Oh, yes. All that is wanted to make money in this business, is money to work with. When I had only twenty or thirty dollars ahead, the returns were slow. But now they will come in a little more to my satisfaction. It won't be long, I trust, before I will be able to own an entire boat-load of produce myself, and pocket all the profits."

Respect for his brother continued to increase in the mind of Peter.

"Your prospects are far better than mine," he remarked, with a slightly perceptible disappointment in his tone of voice. "I've only been able to save up about two hundred dollars. But then I had one very bad year. I took the fever in New Orleans, and the next winter had the inflammatory rheumatism. I came as near dying as I ever wish to be. The fact is, I've not yet fairly recovered from the effect of that sickness, and may never get over it while I live."

"This delving at a trade is a slow way to get along," remarked William. "A man's wit, enterprise and sagacity, don't help him on in the least. I've no fancy for the thing, and never had."

The idea that his brother was getting along in the world so much better than himself, oppressed

the mind of Peter, and made him feel dissatisfied. He looked serious, and in fact, felt troubled. It glanced along his thoughts, that if there were any thing in deserving success, he certainly deserved to prosper more than his brother. The motions of envy were perceptible in his heart. There arose a wish to share in William's better fortune."

Nearly the whole of that day was spent together in a mutual relation of adventures since their separation years before. William spoke of the wrong that had been done him in sending him off to the Refuge for a trifling act, which, if it had been properly met by his master, would never have been repeated. He related his sufferings there, and his escape. Since then, he had seen life in some of its worst aspects; and sickened with the follies into which youth had led him, was now bent on pursuing the road to wealth, and securing gain as the greatest good.

"I shall not rest," said he, "until I own a first-class steamer. Then my fortune is made."

When Peter separated with his brother at night, he felt more dissatisfied than had been the case for many months. William was making rapid strides in the way of prosperity, while he was plodding along, with scarcely a visible progress. On Monday morning he went to work less cheerfully than usual. His thoughts were on the things heard from his brother. All his plans for the future were in confusion. The idea of joining some one, who had a little money, in the publication of a newspaper in some growing western village—this had been a favorite scheme—no longer appeared at-

tractive. That was too slow a way to accumulate property, when compared with William's more rapid progress. At the close of the day, he sought his brother, and had further conversation with him, in which he sought rather to gain than impart information. William was confident and cheerful, as before, and spoke even more flatteringly of his future prospects. The effect was, still further to unsettle the mind of Peter.

Thus their intercourse went on from day to day, the effect being the same on Peter. He did not much like the kind of company that was around his brother; but that was an attendant on the pursuit in which he was engaged; and he learned to tolerate the apparent necessity.

"How much money did you say you had," William asked one day. Two weeks had elapsed since their meeting. "I have forgotten."

"Something rising of two hundred dollars," replied Peter.

"Ah! yes, now I remember. What are you doing with it?"

"Nothing. It is in one of the banks."

"Money should never be idle," said William. "At least not when there are so many ways of using it profitably."

"My own opinion. But not having seen any safe mode of using it to advantage, I have preferred letting it be in safe hands, as it neither eats nor drinks any thing."

"All very prudent. But, why don't you buy produce and ship it for New Orleans on the boats.

It pays handsomely; and is without risk, as you can always insure."

"I know nothing of the business whatever. I would not know what to buy, nor to whom to consign it."

"Don't you know any steamboat clerk whom you could trust."

"No."

"If you did, you might operate handsomely in that way. A certain percentage for attending to the matter would be all he would ask. Steamboat clerks do a great deal of this kind of business. The owners get the freight and they make a commission on sales in New Orleans."

"I see."

"All you want is to make the acquaintance of such a person, and he will advise you what to buy. Or, better still, if you had such a place yourself, you would find it a great deal better than printing. I know some clerks who get a thousand dollars a year, and gather in a thousand or two more in trading and in commissions."

This conversation completely unhinged the mind of Peter Close; so much so that his earnings during the week were three dollars less than usual. He could not work with any interest. It seemed a waste of time that might be so much better employed.

At last William mentioned a first-rate chance to buy a certain article that always brought a good price in New Orleans. A lot was offered at a bargain, which he would certainly have taken him-

self, had he not already invested all his money in pork and lard.

"You can double your money on it," he said to Peter. "I think I can crowd it on to our boat, and will manage the sale for you in New Orleans. When sold, by purchasing groceries, and sending them to this place, a hundred dollars more may be realised. Another successful trip will double your money again; and then you can throw away your type stick, go upon the river yourself, and manage your own affairs."

Peter reflected on all this for some time. But the temptation was too great, and he yielded to its allurements. The investment of his two hundred dollars was made, and the goods purchased therewith placed in the hands of his brother, who started on the voyage to New Orleans a few days afterwards.

CHAPTER XVII.

For a week after William's departure, golden dreams haunted the imagination of Peter Close. The first thing now read in the daily papers, was the quotation of prices in New Orleans, and at least once every morning, the amount of profit to be realized upon his shipment, was cyphered out, the price of the article at the place just named, forming the basis of the calculation. A more uneasy and less pleasant feeling supervened. Little doubts

began to spring up. Had he been wise in placing his all in the hands of William, without knowing more of his character. He had talked fair enough —so could any one. From Louisville William had promised to write to him, but had neglected doing so. This worried him. A letter from the mouth of the Ohio, somewhat relieved his mind. It was in William's confident and cheerful tone.

Weeks now went by, and all was silence and doubt. A greater part of every Sunday was spent at the boat landings along the river, in the hope of meeting some one who had seen William on his way down the Mississippi.

One Sunday, it was nearly six weeks from the time his brother started for New Orleans, Peter made some inquiries about him in the presence of a flat boatman.

"Who's that? Bill Close you're talking about?" asked the man, in a rude, familiar way.

"Yes," replied Peter; "Do you know anything about him?"

"I ought to," said the man.

"Why so?"

"He swindled me out of twenty dollars up at Portsmouth, a couple or three months ago. I only want to get my clinchers on him!" The man doubled his huge fist, and set his teeth menacingly together as he spoke.

"Swindled you?" said Peter, in a rough, whispering voice.

"Yes, as clear as a whistle. But I deserved it, for I knew he was the biggest rascal to be found on the river from Pittsburg to New Orleans."

"Bill Close, you mean," spoke up a bystander, in the rough dress of a boatman.

"Yes, it was of him that we were speaking," said Peter; "What do you know of him?"

"I know that I wouldn't trust him with a picayune to buy medicine for his sick sister. A greater scamp doesn't walk on two legs. I know him like a book. The way he got it down at Natches-under-the-Hill last summer for some of his operations, was a caution. I didn't expect to see the breath of life left in his miserable body."

"What did he do there?" asked Peter.

"He tried to cheat a flat boatman at cards. The fellow caught him at the work, and almost beat his liver out of him."

"He gambles, then?" said Peter.

"I should think so—a regular blackleg in the 'bit and picayune line. It is not often that he rises to the dignity of dollars."

"I heard yesterday," said a new comer, who had joined the little group, and heard a part of the conversation, "that this Bill Close found some one in the city green enough to put two hundred dollars worth of produce in his charge on his last trip down the river."

"Impossible!" was answered to this; "no one could be found fool enough to do such a thing."

"If so," said another, "he has proved, ere this, the truth of the saying, that a fool and his money are soon parted."

Sundry comments on this were made, all expressive of surprise, or doubt as to the truth of the story.

"Two hundred dollars! Ha! ha! A rogue for luck! I never found any body with two hundred dollars, who was willing to trust it in my hands," was remarked, in a laughing voice, by another of the group. "Won't he have a royal blow out! By this time he's in the rig of a gentleman, trying his hand in the cabin of some up-river steamer."

Peter waited to hear no more. Sick at heart, he turned away and went back to his lodgings, with such a pressure of chagrin and disappointment on his feelings, that he could hardly walk steadily in the street.

All of the next week he was too much troubled to work. He went several times to the office, but it was impossible to bring his mind down to the task of setting types. Almost mad with suspense, he determined to seek after some certainty, and with twenty-five dollars in his pocket, all the money he now possessed, he took passage for New Orleans. On arriving there, he instituted a most careful and thorough search after some trace of his brother. In this he was so far successful as to discover the man to whom his goods had been sold. It did not give him much satisfaction to learn that the sale had been for less than cost and charges.

Under the faint hope that William might have gone back to Cincinnati, Peter returned up the river. But the hope was vain. His last dollar now expended, the unhappy young man found it necessary to go to work again. But his spirits were gone. He had not the same incentive to industry that previously existed. His earnings were less than before, and, generally, all expended as he went along. A

feeling of bitter hatred of his brother arose in his mind; and, there were moments, when, if he had suddenly come in his way, he would have been tempted into personal violence.

Habits of dissipation followed, and Peter gradually sunk lower and lower, until he debased himself as a drunkard. Two or three years of such a life were passed, when a long and severe illness, from which he slowly recovered as an inmate of the almshouse, to which he had been sent by the man with whom he boarded, awakened him to serious reflection on his present condition and future prospects. A resolution to reform was made and kept. He again went to work, a sober man, and, by slow degrees, recovered from the degradation of his fall. A desire to do better in the world, once more quickened into a purpose in his mind. Small accumulations began to be made; and, as these increased from tens to twenties, until he had over a hundred dollars laid up, he became more cheerful and hopeful. Plans for the future began to grow upon him. He once more saw himself the owner of a small printing office and newspaper in a country town.

At times, his thoughts would go back to the past, and then a bitterness would arise in his heart. No pleasant flowers had grown along his path through life, to bless him now, though faded, with their perfume. As for William, he had neither heard from, nor seen him, since they parted a few years before. He might be dead, for all he knew; or, in fact, for all he cared. The thought of him aroused angry feelings whenever it flitted through his mind.

Peter Close was standing at his work one day,

thinking of the future, and indulging in some brighter dreams of prosperity than were usually present, when a miserable-looking object, pale, ragged and emaciated, came in, and asked for him. Hearing his name mentioned, Peter turned, with surprise, towards a stranger, who, the moment he saw him, appeared to recognize him, and came quickly to that part of the office where he was standing. Peter examined his face carefully, but saw no trace of a familiar feature.

"How do you do, Peter?" said the man, reaching out his hand. "You don't appear to know me," he added.

"You have the entire advantage of me," said Peter, coldly.

"Is it possible you don't know me?" remarked the stranger.

"I do not."

"I am your brother Frank!"

Peter stepped back a pace or two, exclaiming,

"Impossible!"

"No wonder, perhaps, that you say so," replied the young man. "For I hardly know myself. Sickness and suffering have changed me dreadfully. I've had a hard time of it, Peter. But I need not tell you that. Look at me!"

"Where have you come from?" asked the elder brother, with a coldness of manner that amounted almost to severity.

"I arrived here as a deck passenger from St. Louis, yesterday. I have been trading and knocking about through the far West during the last year or two. Six months ago, I started from Santa Fe

for the States, with a snug little lot of furs; but was robbed and shot on the way by the Indians. More dead than alive I reached St. Louis, where I lay sick for two or three months. To have remained there was as good as to die. I could not help myself, and there was no one to give me even a cup of water. I begged a deck passage this far."

"Why did you come here?" asked Peter.

"I saw William at Fort Independence; and he said that you were in Cincinnati."

The brows of Peter contracted.

"What do you expect?" he asked, his manner still cold.

"Nothing!" replied Frank, in a quick voice, while an indignant warmth burned for a moment in his pale, sunken face. As he spoke, he turned away and retired. Peter now noticed, for the first time, that one arm hung powerless by his side, and that he halted in his gait. A more miserable looking object he never remembered to have seen. For a few moments he stood irresolute; then humanity conquered—for there came before his eyes the image of his mother, and an innocent child playing by her side—that child was his youngest brother. Hastily drawing on his coat, he followed the retreating form of that brother.

"Frank," he said, as he gained his side, just as he had stepped into the street.

But his brother seemed not to hear him.

"Frank," he repeated. "What do you wish me to do for you?"

"Nothing! Nothing!" replied the young man, neither pausing nor looking round.

"If you are sick and destitute, of course I will help you," said Peter.

"Will you?" returned Frank, still moving along, though with apparent difficulty.

"Certainly I will. Have you lodging?"

"No."

"Nor any better clothes than these you have on?"

"You see all that there is of me."

"Then I will find you a lodging place, and provide you with better clothes," said Peter. "Your unexpected appearance in such a distressed condition, could not but take me by surprise. Moreover, the mention of William's name was, by no means, pleasant. I suppose he said nothing of the way in which he had swindled me out of two hundred dollars, and ruined my prospects for life."

"Did he do that?" remarked Frank, quickly.

"He did; and I'll never forgive him," said Peter, with much bitterness.

"I'm sorry," returned Frank, in a voice of sincere regret, pausing, as he spoke, and looking his elder brother once more in the face. "I didn't like what little I saw of him; but I thought better of him than that."

"From all I can learn, he is a most consummate scoundrel," said Peter, with bitter emphasis. "But come; let us find you a lodging place. First, however, you must have some better clothes. We will step into this store."

The young man hesitated, as his brother made a movement to enter a shop they were about passing, saying, as he did so, in a sad voice—

"I don't wish to be a burden to you, Peter. I'm all knocked to pieces, and not able to keep myself. Perhaps, I'd better get an order to go to the Almshouse, and stay there until I pick up again, or die."

There was something about the way in which this was said, that touched the heart of Peter Close, cold and selfish as it was.

"It isn't worth while to talk in that way, Frank," said he, in reply. I'm willing to help you the little that's in my power. If it hadn't been for William, I would now be worth some thousands of dollars. As it is, I'm little more than even with the world. But I'm a great deal better off than you are. So come along."

Frank yielded, though there was an evident reluctance in his manner. He had fondly hoped for a different reception; and the disappointment of a first repulse created so strong a reaction in his feelings, that he felt a degree of self-abandonment, from which it was almost impossible to recover. In a little while, however, he became interested in the matter of purchasing some better clothing. At an expense of nearly twenty dollars, Peter fitted him out in a coarse suit, including a hat, shoes, shirts and stockings; all of which were put on in the dressing room of the store, the old rags he had taken off, rolled into a bundle and thrown into the street.

Peter could not help feeling satisfaction, as he looked at his brother's improved appearance, and saw the grateful expression of his face.

"What's the matter with your arm?" he asked,

observing more closely the limb, noticed as paralyzed while trying on a coat.

"It was shattered by a rifle ball, at the elbow, in a fight with the Indians, and as there was no doctor to be had, I lost the use of it. It was dreadfully swelled and inflamed for some weeks, and pained me awfully. I thought it was going to mortify."

"Can't you move it at all?"

"No. It's all shrunk up. A doctor in St. Louis said it was completely paralyzed, and would never be of any use to me."

"That's bad, indeed."

"I know it is; very bad. I've wished a good many times, since, that I'd been killed outright."

From the clothing store, Peter took his brother to a boarding house, where he left him, promising to come round and see him in the evening.

CHAPTER XVIII.

When Peter Close went back to the printing office, and reflected upon what had just transpired, he did not feel very comfortable. In all probability, his unfortunate brother would be an expense to him for months, and not only prevent him from saving any thing more, but actually draw upon the little fund already accumulated. He could not see him want; and there was but little prospect of his being soon able to help himself. In the disappointment he ex-

perienced, there arose a latent wish in his heart, that it had been with Frank as the unhappy young man had himself wished; in other words, that he had been killed by the Indians outright! In the evening he called to see his brother, who related to him his history since the death of his father. It was a painful history in every part. Not a gleam of bright sunshine seemed to have been thrown across his pathway, at any point of his progress. Thrust away from home, while his eyes were still wet with tears for the death of his only parent and friend, he found harshness and repulsion at every turn. Ill treatment drove him from under the roof of his master, and since that time he had been a wanderer on the face of the earth.

"I have done much evil," he said, in concluding his narrative; "yet I have had many good desires. It would have been very different with me, had there been any one in Boston to whom I could have looked for protection and counsel. If you had only been there! Oh! how often I used to wish for that. I would never have left my place, unkindly as I was treated, had you been near me. That was my first and greatest error. But I was all alone, and badly advised. I felt deserted, and became reckless."

"What has become of the Stevenses?" asked Peter, after remaining silent for some time. "Were they in business when you left?"

"Victor and Hartley Stevens? Oh yes! And getting on wonderfully."

Peter sighed. Thoughts of the past came crowding upon him, and he strove in vain to thrust them

from his mind. When he went back to his boarding house he found a printer there from Boston. The reference which had been made to the Stevenses, created an interest to know more of them.

"How are the Stevenses doing?" he asked, while conversing with this man.

"Doing well, of course."

"They publish a good deal?"

"They now devote themselves almost exclusively to publishing books."

"Ah?"

"Yes, and are making money fast. Their establishment is a very large one, including one of the handsomest book stores in Boston. They employ nearly a hundred persons."

"I had no idea of that. What has become of Thomas?"

"He's in the business."

"Not as a partner?"

"Oh, yes."

"You surprise me. Victor and I were old schoolmates. I knew the whole family well."

"They present a rare instance of fraternal concord. It is said they never disagree even in the smallest matters. I worked in their office for two years, and I am sure I never saw any thing of the kind. If all brothers would have the same mutual regard that the Stevenses have shown," continued the man, "it would be far better for them. But, in too many instances, they separate with a kind of instinctive antipathy, and each takes his own way, indifferent to the other's welfare. Victor Stevens, by his unselfish regard for those who came after him

in the path of life, made their way smoother; and, he will lose nothing in the end, but, rather be the gainer, even in worldly goods, to say nothing of the delight he must experience whenever a thought connects the past with the present."

To hear of the prosperity of these old friends of his early years was any thing but pleasant to the feelings of Peter Close. The difference between their condition and that of his own family was too great; and, moreover, in his own selfishness, improvidence, and want of early regard for his younger brothers, lay the cause of this difference. The same way to success in life had been open to his feet, had he but chosen to walk in it. He had sown bad seed in his field, and now he was reaping the unprofitable harvest.

When Peter Close retired to his room that night, he was more unhappy than he had been for a long time. The wealth of the Stevenses, and their bright prospects in life, contrasted so strongly with his poverty and gloomy prospects, that he was oppressed with a sense of hopelessness. He tossed and turned upon his pillow for half the night, unable to sleep, while images, that he in vain sought to thrust aside, intruded themselves and took sole possession of his mind. The falling back of his helpless brother upon him, just at this time, was most unfortunate. He felt it as a burden that was to press him down, and keep him to the earth.

On the next day, Frank did not come around to the office, as he had promised to do. In the evening Peter went to see him, and found him sick. He had fever and complained of a violent pain in

his back and head. A doctor of course had to be called. Peter thought more of the additional expense than of the illness of his brother. It was three days before the character of the disease fully showed itself. Then the doctor said it was small-pox. Peter fled the chamber in consternation, and left the young man to his fate. The case was immediately reported to the city authorities, who ordered the patient's removal to the hospital.

There was a secret wish in the heart of the brother that Frank might never leave the sick ward, unless when carried forth for burial. But it proved not so. The disease run its course, marring his already disfigured countenance still more; and then he came out again among his fellow men, helpless almost as a child, both in body and mind. Peter could not turn wholly away from his brother. Some remains of human feeling forbade this. For months he paid his board, and supplied him with little articles necessary to his comfort. But, it was all felt as a serious burden; and, such it really was, for it took from Peter the very money he wished to save as the basis of a future business.

In more external comfort than he had enjoyed for a long time, a healthy change took place in the system of Francis Close. Strength came back to his muscles; and, though one arm remained paralyzed, he was able to use the other, and willing to work at anything that might offer. But, there are not many employments into which a man with only one hand can enter. The difficulty, therefore, was to get work. After trying for some time, he succeeded in getting a place in a store as a porter to

carry home light articles, and to do anything else that was within his ability. For this he was to receive four dollars a week. With a feeling of sincere pleasure did he inform Peter of his good fortune.

"I will be a burden on you no longer," said he, "and what is better, will be able, I hope, to return the money you have expended for me, ere many months pass away."

The young man was sincere in this. He had a natural independence of feeling, and the fact of having to lean on his brother, more particularly as the weight was felt to be a burden, troubled him.

Francis Close had been in his new place about a month, and was giving good satisfaction, when, on going on an errand one day, he unexpectedly met a man to whom he owed seventy dollars. The debt had been contracted in another city; and he was not aware that his creditor was a resident of Cincinnati. The man was, of course, very glad to see him, for hope of getting his money was awakened thereby.

"What are you doing here?" was the man's natural inquiry.

Frank related, in the hope of exciting sympathy, all he had suffered, and showed the crippled state in which he was left. But the man thought only of his money.

"How long have you been here?" was next asked.

"Three or four months."

"Have you any friends in the city?"

"I have a brother here."

"What is he doing?"

"He's a printer."

"A journeyman?"

"Yes."

"What does he earn a week?"

"Eight or nine dollars."

"Well, don't you think you can do something for me?" said the creditor.

"Not now. I only get four doliars a week, and it costs me three for boarding and washing."

"When can you begin to pay me something on that old debt? Remember, it has been standing for a long time now."

"I'm sure I cannot tell. But, I will let you have money as quickly as it is possible for me to do so."

"I can't wait a great deal longer," said the man, with some severity of tone. "You deceived me, at first, in regard to your ability to pay."

"I certainly did not mean to do so."

"Appearances are against you; that's all I have to say about it."

They separated, and the unfortunate young man was deeply troubled. In about a week the creditor called at the place where he was employed, and proposed that Frank should give him an order on the store-keeper for a dollar a week of his wages.

"I can't do that. How am I to live on three dollars a week?" was the natural reply.

"That's all it costs you for board and washing, according to your own showing."

"But I have other expenses. I must have clothes to wear."

"Then I am to understand that you won't do it?"

"I can't do it. You ask more than it is in my power to give. Find me employment at increased wages, and you shall have an order, weekly, for all above four dollars. But on less than that sum I cannot live. If I go in rags I cannot retain my place."

The man affected to be very indignant at all this, and turned away, saying as he did so, that he would find a way to make the money come.

On the next morning a warrant was served upon Frank, and he was compelled to appear before a magistrate, to answer for a debt of seventy dollars. He attempted no defence, and, of course, judgment went against him.

"What shall be done in the case?" asked the magistrate, turning to the prosecutor.

"He must find security," was answered.

"Can you give security for the payment of this debt?" inquired the legal functionary.

Frank shook his head.

"His brother will be satisfactory," said the creditor.

"I shall not ask him," replied Frank, in a firm, indignant voice. "It's no debt of his."

"You can issue a execution," said the prosecutor.

The execution was filled out.

"What will you take?" asked the magistrate.

"His body."

"Then you wish a commitment?"

"Certainly."

The commitment was made out, placed in the hands of an officer, and the body of Francis Close removed to prison.

The man at whose instance this was done, left the magistrate's office and went in search of Peter Close. On finding him, he said—

"Your brother's in trouble."

"What's the matter?" inquired Peter, with a look of alarm.

"He's in jail."

"In jail!"

Peter leaned heavily on the case at which he was standing.

"Yes, and he wishes to see you."

"In jail! Why is he there?"

"For debt."

"He owes nothing."

"Beg your pardon! He owes a man, who has just found him out, an old debt of seventy dollars."

"Contracted here?"

"No, in Pittsburg."

"He has nothing. How does he expect to get it by putting him in jail?"

"That's his business," was rudely answered. "I merely come to tell you. Good morning."

"Oh dear!" murmured Peter, as he hastily drew on his coat, "where is all this to end? I'd better have a mill-stone around my neck at once!"

On arriving at the prison, he found his brother in the debtor's apartment, into which he was permitted to enter, sitting on a bench, with his face buried in his hands. The attitude of deep dejection touched his feelings.

"Frank!" he said, kindly.

The young man started suddenly to his feet.

"You here!" he said. "I didn't expect to see you."

"I was sent for."

"Not by me."

"The man who called said you had sent for me."

Frank shook his head and replied—

"No, I did not send for you, nor purpose, doing so. You've had trouble and expense enough on my account already. I wish I was dead!—Go back to your work, and let me remain here."

"How much is the debt?" asked Peter.

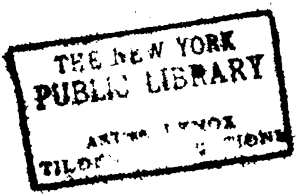
"No matter. It's more than I can pay. I shall be as well here as any where else. Go back, Peter, and leave me to my fate."

"What magistrate committed you?"

"It's of no consequence for you to know. Just go back to your office, will you? He'll get tired of keeping me here, when he finds that it will do no good."

Peter stood irresolute for some moments. He then retired, and gained from the jailer all the information he wished. To let Frank remain in prison was not to be thought of for a moment, while he could be released by his going security for the debt. This security was tendered and accepted, and a release sent back to the prison. In less than an hour from the time the iron hinges turned heavily for the admission of the debtor, they turned again for his release—and he went back to his employment. "Of course, I shall have it to pay," was the thought of Peter's mind, as he returned to his

THE BROTHER OF PETER CLOSE IN PRISON. p. 165.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work; and, with that thought, came so discouraged a feeling that he lost heart once more. When he took the composing stick in his hand, and turned his eye upon the copy before him, it was with such an entire want of interest in his work, that, after setting a few lines, he threw down his stick, and putting on his hat and coat, left the office. After wandering, unhappy and irresolute, about the street for some time, he entered a tavern and called for a glass of brandy. Entire abstinence from intoxicating drink had been his habit for some years. Of course, the fiery draught inflamed his old desire, and he went home to his boarding house that night so badly intoxicated, that he could scarcely find his way to bed.

On the next morning, he awoke in a most wretched state of mind. The more he reflected, the more desperate did he feel. Every thing seemed to frown upon him. From the thought of going to work, his mind turned with an unpleasant feeling. It was nearly ten o'clock, before he left his room. He then went to a tavern, and commenced drinking again. A week of dissipation, during which time he squandered about twenty dollars, made him sick, and he was confined to the house for ten days. As soon as he was able to get abroad again, without mentioning his intention to any one, or even seeing his brother, he left the city for St. Louis. There he led an intemperate life for a couple of years, when he once more paused in his downward course, abandoned his vile habits and associates, and endeavored again to raise himself in the world by industry and prudence.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE reader cannot but feel an interest in the excellent Mrs. Redmond and her family. What concerns them is briefly told. Between Anna Redmond and Victor Stevens, it was but natural that a feeling beyond that of mere friendship should arise. A tenderer emotion found its way into both their hearts; and, but for a mysterious dispensation of Providence, which caused a lovely human flower to droop and die, in the spring time of its beauty and fragrance, they would have been joined in a holier bond than ever existed. Long and sincerely did Victor mourn the loss of one whose image never arose in his mind without the inspiration of higher and better purposes. While a weary traveller, she had been to him as a pleasant spring and a cooling shadow by the way-side. Her memory, as years passed on, came to him as the memory of a long departed sister; and it is cherished now with an undying tenderness, and mingles undisturbingly with a deeper and different love. William Redmond is a merchant in good business, indebted for his advancement to the substantial aid of his old and still true friends, Victor and Hartley Stevens. Mrs. Redmond has passed the bourne from which no traveller returns. But she lived to gather a sweet reward for the genuine kindness she extended to a

lonely apprentice boy, who was without a friend in the great city.

From the time Thomas Stevens came into the business, as has been seen, the upward movement of the establishment was more certain and rapid. The opening of a bookstore on Washington street, gave the firm all the advantages in the trade that had been anticipated. Booksellers as well as publishers, their business connexions in Southern cities, and with towns throughout the New England States, became wider, and the avenues for the sale of their own books more extended. In these enlarged operations, there was, of course, an increased risk, and a necessity for the coolest judgment and most far-seeing business intelligence. One mind had, therefore, to exercise a most earnest discrimination; and that mind, developed by circumstances for this important use, was the mind of Hartley, the second brother. Victor's mind had a greater motive power than that of Hartley. It was quick to decide upon a question, and ardent in the pursuit of a purpose. But Hartley looked deeper into all the collateral relations of a thing, and never decided upon a course of action until he saw clearly the ultimate effect.

It was this acknowledged peculiarity in the mind of Hartley that caused his brothers to place him in the responsible position that he held.—They knew that they could confide in his judgment. Thus, Hartley's intelligence in business matters became, as it were, the balance-wheel of the whole concern. Had Victor, in entering the world, cared only for himself and sought only his own advantage, the

chances of final success would have been doubtful. Up to a certain point he would have gone on prosperously, but in complicating a large business, he would most probably have committed fatal mistakes. But, as it was, the particular abilities and intelligence of the three brothers, fixed upon the three separate departments of one business for which the mind of each had a particular fitness, made all go on with harmony and safety. In the union of their intelligence, as well as their efforts, consisted their strength. Entering the world separately, each might have failed of success; entering it together, they were able to overcome all difficulties.

Mr. Victor Stevens was sitting, one day, in the back part of the store, alone, when a man, poorly clad, and with a slow step, and rather dejected air, opened the door and entered. Mr. Stevens fixed his eyes on him a moment, and then, not recognizing him, said—

"Good morning, sir."

"Good morning," returned the man.

There was a pause, and they looked at each other.

"Do you want a journeyman?" asked the man.

"The foreman of the office will tell you."

The man lingered a short time, looking earnestly at Mr. Stevens. As he partly turned away he said—

"You don't know me?"

"I do not. And yet there is something familiar in your face," replied Mr. Stevens, regarding the stranger more carefully than at first.

"My name is Peter Close."

"Peter Close! Is it possible!" Mr. Stevens arose quickly, and extended his hand to the old friend of his boyhood. Then reaching him a chair, he said—"Sit down—sit down. I am glad to meet you again. Though sorry to find you no better off, if, indeed, so well, as when you started in the world."

"I have not done so well as you, certainly," replied Peter. "And, I suppose, the fault lies at my own door."

"Where have you been these many years!"

"In the South and West, working at my trade."

"What has become of your brothers, William and Frank?"

"They're both dead."

"Dead! Is it possible?"

"Yes. William was shot, away off in the Indian country, last spring; so I heard. Frank died a year ago in the Cincinnati prison."

"In prison?"

"Yes. Poor fellow! He was in jail for debt when the Cholera visited the West, and was one of its first victims."

"Indeed! How sad!" Mr. Stevens was grieved at this intelligence.

Just then, an old man, walking with a firm step, passed through the counting-room. Peter looked at him earnestly. As he retired through the door, he said—

"That is your father?"

"Yes."

"How well he looks. Does he live here in the city?"

"No. He is still on the old homestead."

"And your mother?"

"She is there also."

The man sighed, and casting his eyes upon the floor, mused for some time in silence. He was thinking of his own home—of his father and mother, and the brothers who were once gathered with him beneath the humble roof.

"And I remain, of all my kindred, the last fading leaf on a withered bough," said he, with visible emotion. "Your brothers are partners with you in this business?" he resumed, after a pause.

"Yes. We are all together."

"Mutually sustaining each other?"

"Yes."

"And mine, after dragging me down in my efforts to rise, and keeping me at the foot of the ladder, until hope and energy were gone, are dead. Ah me! What a contrast! And yet, Victor, when we came to Boston as boys, our chances were equal. I have often thought, of late years, about what you said in regard to brothers helping each other; and especially the duty of an elder brother. Had I acted towards William as you did towards Hartley, how different might have been his fate! and how different might his actions have affected me! And poor Frank! When he came to the city, there was no one to look after nor care for him. He had a hard time as a boy, and a harder time still as a man. But he is at rest now! Ah! How painfully these things come back upon me! Victor Stevens! you have your reward and I have mine! But how different are these rewards! What a man soweth,

that shall he also reap. We both have our harvest-time; but what a difference in the harvest!"

To this, Mr. Stevens made no reply. What could he say? Painfully did the shrinking form and bowed head of the unhappy man affect him. But words of comfort it was not in his power to utter. Every man must reap in his own harvest field, and gather wheat or tares, according as he has sown good or bad seed.

"You will give me work?" said Peter Close, lifting his head and speaking in a firmer tone. "I have walked from Albany to this city, and am now without a dollar. All I ask is work. I have come for nothing more."

"Oh, yes; you shall have work. But you do not look well."

"I am not well. I am exhausted by long traveling and want of proper food."

"Then go and recruit yourself for a few days."

And as Mr. Stevens said this, he took from his pocket book a twenty dollar bill and handed it to Peter, adding—

"Take this and supply your present wants."

But the man drew back, murmuring—

"No, no; I did not come for that. Let me go to work, and pay me what I earn, daily, until I can a little recover myself."

"Take it!" said Victor Stevens, in the tone of one who felt that he had a right to command. "I will not give you work until you are in a condition to work. There, take the money! We will settle the account at another time!"

Thus urged, Peter Close received the money, and

with many thanks, retired, promising to come back in a few days; or as soon as he felt able to go to work. In a week he re-appeared, took his place as a compositor in the office of one who had been his school-mate, and who entered the world with prospects no better than his own.

More than fifteen years have passed since that strange meeting. Peter Close remains a simple type-setter in the office, earning weekly but little more than he spends. His habits are not regular, and occasionally he loses time and spends in dissipation what little he may happen to have saved. All these irregularities are borne with for the sake of early associations.

As for the brothers, they continued to increase in wealth, and to command the respect and esteem of their fellow citizens. A few years ago, the oldest brother retired with a large fortune, to give place to two of the sons of Hartley Stevens, who are now members of the firm.

And here we bring our unadorned history to a close. The lesson it teaches is one of vast importance to those who are just entering upon life—to the youth of our great and happy country—to parents who would see their children united and prosperous. "In union there is strength." Let this truth be taught in every family. Let children learn it from their cradles. Let parents teach it to them as one of the best and highest precepts appertaining to natural life. If there is family concord—brotherly union—reciprocal regard and interest; the way of entrance into life will be far less difficult than it is found by many. Not all in the same

family are, by nature, fitted for a hard strife with fortune; yet each has some peculiar ability, and, if united in entering the world, can usually so work together, sustain, encourage and help each other, as to secure the well-being of all.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY.

"JAMES," said a master workman to a young man, a journeyman in his shop, "business has become so dull that I must reduce the number of my men. As you came in last, you will have to go among the first. I am sorry for this, but cannot help it. To continue my present force would be to ruin me."

James Harker, that was the journeyman's name, looked surprised and pained for a moment or two. But he had a confident spirit within him, and soon recovered his self-control.

"I am sorry, too," he replied. "But I know business is very bad, and that you are perfectly right in reducing your expenses. I shall get along somehow, no doubt."

"Yes, James, I have no doubt of that. Where there is a will there is a way."

"The truth of that saying I have proved more than once in my life," the young man returned. "And I shall prove it again."

"I am sure of that," the master workman said. "Such a spirit as your's always makes success."

At the end of the week, Harker, with three other journeymen, received their wages, and were discharged. Among these, Harker was the only mar-

ried man. He had three children. One of the journeymen thrown out of work, was named Wilson. He lived near Harker, and the two walked homeward together. Wilson was a young man of good mind, some education, and excellent moral character. He had a widowed mother with whom he lived, and towards whose support he contributed as much as was needful. In doing this, he was taxed but lightly; for old Mrs. Wilson had an independent mind, and was habitually industrious. She always would be doing something.

"This is rather a bad business, Wilson," James Harker said, as the two left the shop, each with a week's wages in his pocket. He did not speak in a desponding, but, rather, in a cheerful voice.

"I don't see what we are to do," was gloomily replied. "There's no work to be had in the city, and won't be for months to come."

"I shouldn't like to say that. There must be work somewhere."

"If there is, I, for one, would like very much to find it."

"If there is, I, for one, will find it," Harker said confidently.

"You can try, if you choose; but you'll have all your trouble for nothing."

"We will see. I have never given up yet, and never intend giving up while there is any thing left of me. It is the worst thing in the world to despond. Despondency is almost sure to produce failure, while confidence guarantees success. Where there is a will there is a way, that is my motto. It has helped me through narrower places than this."

"It has never helped me, then; and I'm sure I have a good enough will."

"Perhaps it is a passive and not an active will. It may be that you call upon Jupiter without putting your shoulder to the wheel."

"You may think so, but I don't," was returned a little impatiently.

Harker seeing that his fellow workman wouldn't bear plain talk, said no more on the subject. On returning home, James saw that the face of his wife was troubled. She looked at him earnestly, while the tears stood in her eyes: but she said nothing. His countenance wore its usual cheerful air. This was, in part, assumed, to strengthen the heart of his wife, who was more inclined than himself to look at the dark side of things. After the children were all in bed, and his wife had taken her seat by a little work-table, with her sewing in her hand, James said to her:

"Don't look so troubled, Lucy. All will come out right in the end. I shall get work somewhere."

"I don't know, James. Times, you have said all a long, are very dull. I'm afraid you will lie out of work all summer. And if that should happen, I don't know what we shall do. Mr. Ekhart hasn't had a stroke of work these four months, and can't get it any where. His family is in a distressed condition."

"Ekhart don't try to get work as he ought to try. He's above doing many things that he might do. I know all about him."

"His family is greatly in want of every thing."

"And he is walking about like a gentleman.

Don't think, for an instant, Lucy, that I will ever see you and the children want, while I have health and strength. If I can't get work at my trade, I can get it at something else. Work I will. If I can't make ten dollars a week, I will make five. Half a loaf is better than no bread. Not so Ekhart. He must have just such kind of work, and just such prices. He can't do this, that, nor the other."

"But where is work to be had? There are a large number of persons idle."

"Where there is a will there is a way, Lucy. That is my sheet anchor."

"Suppose every body had this will?"

"Then for every body there would be a way. Not, of course, exactly the way most agreeable to every body; but, still, a way in which service might be rendered to others, and an equivalent for that service obtained."

The confident tone of her husband encouraged Lucy. The feeling of despondency that had weighed upon her spirits for many hours, gradually passed off. This was succeeded by a more cheerful state of mind.

Early on Monday morning Harker started out to put his first resolution into practice, which was to visit every establishment in New York, carrying on the branch of business at which he worked. As he had not calculated on getting work at the first, second, or third application, he was not discouraged even when dinner time found him unsuccessful. To his wife's anxious questions he replied cheerfully. After dinner he went out again.

"How is business?" he asked, for the fiftieth time, as he entered a shop near the close of the day.

"Dull enough," was the reply.

"Don't you think you could make room for a hand?"

Before a reply to this could be made, a man entered the shop, and asked if a certain number of articles, such as were manufactured there, could be delivered to him in ten days. The master workman agreed to furnish what was wanted in the stipulated time, and at once engaged the services of James Harker to enable him to fulfill his contract.

As Harker was returning home towards nightfall he met Wilson.

"Have you found any work yet?" asked the former.

"I havn't tried. It's no use. The business is killed up. I may look about a little during the week. But I don't expect any good to come from it."

"Nor will any good come from it, I am myself inclined to think. Efforts made in such a spirit are rarely successful. I started out this morning confident that some good would come of my efforts. And I am pleased to say that I have not been disappointed. After going from shop to shop, until I had gone nearly over the whole city, I at last hit the very moment when a dealer was making a large and hurried order, and obtained work for ten days."

"Ten days! What is that?"

"It is ten days' work. Which is much better than ten days lost. Something favorable will turn up after that."

"Maybe so. But you'll find, in the end, that you are too sanguine."

"Think so?"

"Yes, I do."

"We'll see."

"Good day!" And Wilson passed on, feeling chagrined at Harker's good fortune, which was a rebuke of his own want of confidence and activity.

The cheerful smile that lit up the face of Lucy, when Harker mentioned his success, more than repaid him doubly for the efforts of the day.

The job lasted for the time specified. By working early and late, he was able to make just twenty dollars in ten days.

"Well, are you through with your job, yet?" asked Wilson, meeting him the day after he had finished.

"Yes, I got through yesterday."

"What are you going to do now?"

"I'm going to try for work somewhere else."

"Do you think you will get it?"

"I do. Something will offer I am sure."

"You'll be a luckier dog than are some ten or a dozen I know, if it does. I've been trying ever since we quit work at L——'s, but it's no use. Not a hand's turn can I find to do. I went this morning to two shops, but no journeymen were wanted."

"Where there's a will there's a way," Harker said to himself, as he walked slowly and thoughtfully along, after parting with Wilson. "He's not earnest enough about it. Two shops this morning! Why, I've been to ten, and was only too late by a

quarter of an hour at one of them to secure a permanent situation. He's got a mother to fall back upon; while I've got a wife and children to fall back upon me. That makes a wonderful difference."

Wilson, on parting with Harker, returned home.

"It's no use trying," he said. "I don't believe I shall get anything to do for months to come. I called at two or three shops this morning: every thing is perfectly flat. I know at least a dozen journeymen with families to support, who have not had a stroke of work for weeks."

The mother spoke words of encouragement to her son. Told him not to let his mind be disturbed. That she could easily keep up the family for six months to come, when work would be brisk again.

Assurances of this kind tended to make Wilson less anxious about employment, and, of course, less likely to secure it. It was not pleasant to his feelings, to be going from shop to shop, seeking work, and so he quit doing so. Many hours were spent in reading, but many more in wandering aimlessly about, waiting until business should revive.

"It's dreadful dull," was his oft repeated remark, to fellow workmen, who, like himself, could find nothing better to do than walking about the streets. Occasionally he would fall in with Harker, who, somehow or other managed never to be idle over a day or two at a time. He kept always in the way of employment, because he was anxious to obtain it, and in consequence, picked up many little jobs that would otherwise have been missed.

"I don't know how it is," Wilson would some-

times say to him, "that you manage always to keep at something. I can't meet with any thing to do. And I'm sure I am as willing to work as you are."

"You don't keep all the while trying, as I do, I suppose. These are times when work has to be looked up. It doesn't come after people as it did a year ago."

Wilson didn't relish plain talk like this, because it reflected upon him unfavorably. He evidenced his true feelings in his reply, that was not spoken in a calm, mild tone. The effect, however, was to cause him to go among the shops on the next day, when he was fortunate enough to secure a job that lasted a few weeks.

"Nothing like trying," remarked Harker to him sententiously, the next time they met. "It possesses a wonderful virtue."

But, even with trying, Harker found, after a while, that he could not get enough to do to meet the wants of his family. Times seemed to grow harder. His mind, constantly active, and constantly seeking after the means for earning money, devised many schemes, and was aided by many suggestions awakened therein, that would never have presented themselves, had not his will been constantly stimulating his thoughts. The result of almost every day, was, to him, an illustration of his favorite adage—where there is a will there is a way. He knew that the will was creative, and made to itself the means for gaining its ends. It was the consciousness of this, that gave him courage to hope even in the hour of deepest darkness.

Some time had elapsed since he was thrown out

of regular employment, and even he had been made to fear often amid his hard struggles. At length, try as he would, he could find nothing to do.

One morning, after having been idle for a week, he found himself with only a single dollar left, and no kind of prospect in regard to work. For the first time he could not relish his food. For the first time his confidence forsook him, and, instead of cheerful words for the ear of his wife, he was silent, depressed and thoughtful. To see her husband, always before, in every trying situation, so assured and cheerful, thus distressed about their prospects, at once dashed the spirit of Lucy to the earth. When she did venture to speak in her husband's presence, her voice was tremulous,—when she looked him in the face, he could see that her eyes were just ready to run over with tears. He could not bear this. It caused him the most poignant affliction of mind. Early after the scarcely tasted morning meal, he went out with a kind of desperate determination to get something to do at all hazards.

"There is, there must be work for him that is willing to do it, somewhere," he said, half-aloud, as he strode away from his door.

He had not gone far when he met his old fellow workman, Wilson. The latter looked quite contented. Since his last job, he had made a few feeble efforts to get something to do, but failing of success, was now contented to eat his bread quietly, and wait patiently until times grew better. The statement from every one he met, that business was worse than ever, and that it was no use to look for work, satisfied his mind.

"Ah, good morning, Harker," he said, with something of triumph in his voice — "even your will can't always find a way, it seems. So you are idle still?"

"Yes. I have not been able to get any thing to do for a week."

"And won't for a week to come—perhaps a year."

"I'll get something to do before this day is over," was the half desperate reply.

"At street sweeping, then."

"Very well. Let it be street sweeping, or any other honest calling that I can find. Work I must and will have."

"I want work as much as any one, but I am not quite prepared for street sweeping, sawing wood, or turning carman."

"If you had a wife and three or four children to care for, you might be thankful for the chance of turning a penny in either of the occupations you have named."

"But I havn't, thank fortune!"

"I have, then; and I am willing to work at any honest calling."

By this time the friends, who had been walking down Washington street, had nearly reached the Battery. Harker paused at the corner of a street, and said that he was going to cross to the other side of Broadway, and look about among the stores in Pearl and other business streets, to see if he couldn't get work as a laborer, or light porter.

"You are not in earnest, surely?" Wilson said, "A laborer, or porter!'

"I am in earnest," Harker replied. "Why not? Will it not be much better for me to work in a warehouse, or carry small parcels, or do the errands in a store, than to sit down, or walk idly about, while my family is suffering? I think so."

"Come walk down upon the Battery, with me, at any rate. Perhaps something will offer there. Who knows but that you may find small boating worth the trial. There are one American and two foreign ships of war lying off in the stream."

This was said lightly, but it made the heart of James Harker bound. The suggestion he saw, at a glance, was a good one. He did not hesitate a moment, but walked with a quickened pace to the Battery, and down towards Castle Garden. Several small boats were there, in each of which was an active oarsman.

"What will you charge to take me off to the Constellation?" a man, with a lady on his arm, asked of a boatman, just as Harker and his friend came up.

"Two shillings a piece to go, and the same to return," was the reply,

"That is a dollar to take us there and back again?"

"Yes, sir."

The gentleman and lady entered the boat and were rowed off.

"Just the thing!" ejaculated Harker, as the boat bounded away. "Thank you a hundred times for your suggestion Wilson."

"But you are not in earnest?"

"I am." His brightening face spoke more unequivocally than his words.

"Nonsense! But where will you get a boat?"

"Hire one."

"You can't."

"I can try. Where there's a will, there's a way." And so saying, Harker turned away, and took a direct course to the lower end of the Battery, where he soon succeeded in getting a boat from a man with whom he was acquainted. In this he rowed around to Castle Garden. Wilson, curious to see where all this would end, had remained standing by the railing of the Battery. He could hardly believe his own eyes, when he saw Harker come rowing up, close under where he stood, and ask, jocosely, if he did not wish to go out to the Constellation. But a word or two had passed between them, when half a dozen men came up and asked if he would take them out to a French brig that lay off in the harbor, and return with them in an hour. A bargain was at once made with them, they agreed to pay him two dollars for the job, or a little over two shillings apiece.

"Where there's a will there's a way, Wilson," Harker cried out to his friend, in a confident voice, as he pulled off with his freight from the shore.

"I wouldn't do that for any one," muttered Wilson, in a dissatisfied tone, as he turned away and left the Battery.

At dinner time, Harker did not come home. A frugal meal had been prepared by his wife at the regular hour, but he did not return as usual. This made her feel uneasy. She could not remember

when he had been away so long before. All the afternoon she waited for him, expecting him to come in every minute, but she waited in vain. Many thoughts troubled her. She had permitted herself to become gloomy and desponding while she had her husband to depend upon. Suppose any accident should have happened to him! Suppose he were dead!

This thought startled her so that she rose up from the chair she had drawn close to the window, in order to see her work more distinctly in the deepening twilight. At this moment the door opened, and her husband entered.

"O, James! where have you been all day?" she asked, eagerly.

"Hard at work, Lucy, and here are my net gains," holding out in his hand seven hard dollars. "I hired a boat for a dollar, and have made eight dollars by rowing people out to the ships of war in the harbor. I've been hard at work all day, and now feel as happy as a young kitten, and as hungry as a bear."

Six months from that day, Harker, who continued "small boating," owned three boats, one of which he daily plied himself between the shore and the shipping, and the others he hired out. He had three hundred dollars in the Savings' Bank, and was as happy, to use his own words, as the day was long. As for Wilson, he walked about for nearly the whole of that time, doing nothing to benefit others, and living a burden to himself. Harker had several times tried to induce him to take a boat and try his luck, but the proposition always made him half

angry. To his false pride there was something degrading in the occupation. He did not reflect that idleness, or dependence upon others, was more really degrading than any occupation that was strictly honest. He had not studied to purpose that noble couplet of Pope's—

> "Honor and shame from no condition rise,
> Act well your part—there all the honor lies."

Instead of looking at his duty—instead of only asking "Is this right?"—he let himself be governed by what he supposed people would think or say of him. Alas! that there should be so many in the world like Wilson:—Men, from whose intelligence, and professed independence of character, more, much more ought to be expected.

When trade again revived, James Harker sold off his boats, took his money out of the Savings' Bank, and set up for himself. He is now doing a good business; lives in a large, comfortable house, and, it is hardly necessary to say, is esteemed and respected by all who know him. Six years have passed since he and Wilson parted on the Battery—one to row a party of men to a ship lying in the harbor, and the other to saunter listlessly about the streets. Harker is worth some ten thousand dollars, and Wilson is one of his journeymen.

Where there's a will, there's a way.

DON'T BE DISCOURAGED.

'DON'T be discouraged, my young friend!" said an elderly man to his companion, whose youthful appearance indicated that few more than twenty years had passed over his head.

"But I am discouraged, Mr Linton. Havn't I been disappointed in every thing that I have yet undertaken? Success is a word, the meaning of which I shall never realize."

"You are young, Henry."

"Quite old enough to have proved, beyond a doubt, that, try as I will, I shall never rise in the world. I am doomed to struggle on, like a swimmer against a strong current. Instead of advancing at all, I shall be gradually borne down the stream."

"If you cease to struggle, you will, unquestionably."

"And will, whether I struggle or not."

"No: that cannot be. Vigorous, and long continued effort will gradually strengthen and mature your thoughts. Rough contact with the world, in which you are made to suffer keenly, will bring out the latent energies of your mind. Bear on manfully for a few years—falter not, though every thing look dark, and success will as certainly crown your efforts, as an effect follows its producing cause."

"I wish I could think so," the young man replied, shaking his head despondingly. "But I am fully convinced, that for me, at least, the door of success is closed."

"How old are you, Henry?"

"Just twenty-seven."

"And have you already failed in three business efforts?"

"Yes, and what is worse, have become involved in debt."

"But you mean to pay all you owe, if it is ever in your power?"

"Can you doubt that for a moment, Mr. Linton?" the young man said, in a quick tone, while a flush passed over his face. "I will pay it all, if I die in the struggle."

"And yet you were just now talking about giving up in despair?"

True. And I do feel utterly discouraged. For the last five years no man has labored more earnestly than I have done. Early and late have I been at my business, sometimes even until midnight, and yet all has been in vain. Like a man in a quagmire—every struggle to extricate myself from difficulties, has only had the effect to sink me deeper. And now, with honest intentions towards all men, I am looked upon by many as little better than a swindler."

"You are wrong, in regard to that, Henry. Such is not the estimation in which you are held."

"Yes, but it is. I have been told to my teeth that I was not an honest man."

"By whom?"

"By one of my creditors."

"That is the solitary case of a man whose inordinate love of self, showing itself in a love of money, has made him forget the first principles of the law of human kindness."

"No matter what prompted the unkind remark, its effect is none the less painful, especially as he fully believed what he said."

"You cannot tell, Henry, whether he fully believed it or not. But suppose that his words did but express his real thought—what then? Does his opinion make you different from what you really are?"

"Of course not. But it is very painful to have such things said."

"No doubt of it. But conscious integrity of purpose should be sufficient to sustain any man."

"It might in my case, if I were not thoroughly crushed down. My mind is like an inflamed body—the lighest touch is felt far more sensibly than would be a heavy blow if all were healthy. You understand me?"

"Perfectly, and I can feel for you. But knowing that the state of mind in which you are is, as you intimate, an unhealthy one, I cannot agree with you in your discouraging conclusions."

"But what can I do? Have I not failed in three earnest, and well directed efforts to advance myself in the world?"

"Try again, Henry."

"And come out worse than before."

"No—no—that need not follow. Try in a better way."

"Do you mean to intimate that I have not con-

ducted my business in a proper manner?" asked the young man, in a quick voice, his cheek instantly glowing.

"I do not mean to intimate," returned Mr. Linton calmly, "that you committed any wilful wrong in your business. And yet, I suppose you will not yourself deny the position, that there was something wrong about it, or success would have met your earnest efforts, instead of failure."

"I don't know," was the gloomy response. "The Fates, I believe, are against me."

"What do you mean by the Fates?"

The young man made no reply, and his monitor resumed in a still more serious tone—

"You can only mean, of course, that Divine Being, who is the author of our existence, and the controller of our destinies. That Being, who is essential love and wisdom, and whose acts towards us can only flow from a pure regard for the good of his creatures. And if such regard be directed by wisdom that cannot err, can any act of his towards you be evil?"

"I try to think in that way—and try often," returned the young man, in a softened tone. "But it is hard, very hard to believe that a Being of infinite goodness would so hedge up the path of any one as mine has been hedged up—would so mock with vain hopes the heart of any one as mine has been mocked."

"Your mind is not now in a state to think calmly and rationally upon this subject, Henry," Mr. Linton said; "but the time will come, when you will see in this state of severe trial a dispensation of

mercy. It will then be perceived, that all this was for the purpose of giving you juster views of life, and confirming you in higher ends than any that you have heretofore acted upon. For the present, I will only repeat—Don't be discouraged! Try again! Put your shoulder once more to the wheel. Depend upon it, your time will come; but not until you can bear success in a right spirit. And to have success before you are thus prepared to bear it, would be the worst injury that could befall you."

Henry Grant, the young man here introduced to the reader's notice, had, at the age of twenty-one, done the very imprudent thing of entering into business for himself. True, from the age of seventeen he had been in the store of a merchant, who had carried on a very extensive trade, and had, moreover, acquired so thorough a knowledge of business, that the most important subordinate position in the house had been assigned to him. But this confidence reposed in him, and this familiarity with the business in which he was engaged, deceived him. He saw that heavy profits were accruing every year. That while he was toiling on through the long months of an annual cycle of a single thousand dollars, tens of thousands were added to the coffers of his already wealthy employer.

"Why should I waste the best years of my life in making money for others?" he asked himself, the day after he had attained his majority.

This thought was the germ of discontent in his mind. It was nourished, and grew into a tree, whose thick leaves so overshaodwed his mind, that

he could not see the clear sky of sober truth above, in which shone stars whose light beamed forth to guide him. He became eager for wealth, that he might have selfish enjoyments. Every beautiful dwelling, the reward of, perhaps, years of steady industry, and now enjoyed by some opulent merchant, he envied its possessor. He sighed when a rich man's carriage rolled by him in the street. Nothing rare, or new, or elegant, gratified his eye, because it was not his own.

Impelled by a weak and selfish desire to be suddenly rich, a few years after he had come to the age of manhood, he drew from the hands of his guardian five thousand dollars, the hard-earned and carefully husbanded treasure left him by his father, and threw himself with large ideas and unwavering confidence upon the troubled sea of merchandise. The story of this adventure is soon told. In two years he was compelled to wind up his business, having lost his entire capital.

This was a painful shock. But it was of use to him in unsealing his eyes, and giving him a truer view of life, and soberer ideas from which to act. Still, he could not think, having once been in business for himself, of falling back into the monotonous, dull, and humble condition of a clerk. There was something in the fact of mingling with merchants on a plane of equality, that flattered his vanity. He had thus mingled, and thus felt flattered. The thought of taking his old position, and of losing the courtesies that had been so grateful to him, was more than he could think of enduring. This feel-

ing alone, had none other operated upon his mind, would have induced him again to make an effort to get into business.

A few months enabled him to so arrange his old affairs, as to be ready to go on again. He found numbers ready to sell him goods on short credit, and this determined him once more to cast himself upon the ocean. He did so. Two more years passed on, and at their termination he found himself, alas! again in a narrow place. Much more than all his profits in that time were locked up in bad debts, remnants, and unsaleable goods. For a time, by borrowing from a few friends, he had been enabled to meet his payments, but that resource at last failed, and trouble again came upon him. But it was a worse trouble than before, and shocked his proud, sensitive feelings severely. His goods and accounts, after all had been given up, were not sufficient to pay the claims against him. He was, therefore, an insolvent debtor.

As fairy castles fade away under the magician's touch, so faded away, at this event, the glowing ideas of wealth and splendor that had passed so temptingly before the eyes of Henry Grant. He did not now ask for his tens of thousands—his country seats, glittering equipages, and all the splendid paraphernalia attendant upon high station in society, united with immense wealth. To have possessed the few thousands of dollars that were exhibited as deficits in his accounts, would have compassed his dearest wishes. But even this humble and honorable desire was not granted. He was in

debt, and what was worse, with a sense of helplessness and hoplessness added thereto.

In due course of time, his business was settled up, and he again thrown upon the world. While debating in his mind the propriety of accepting an offer from his old employer, and entering his store as a clerk, propositions were made to him from an individual to accept a share in his business. He did so without consultation with any friend. The result was unfavorable. Scarcely a year had elapsed, before *crash* went the whole concern about his ears.

It was under the disheartening effects of this last disaster, that we have seen him laboring. How far he had just cause of despondency, or just cause to suppose that the Fates were against him, the reader will be likely to determine more wisely than he was able to do himself.

"Don't be discouraged, Henry!" said his old employer to him a few days after the conversation between the young man and Mr. Linton. "You are young yet. I was thirty-four when I commenced my present business, and you are but twenty-seven. You have seven years, therefore, in your favor."

"But I am in debt."

"How much?"

"Five thousand dollars. Or, if I am to be held liable for my late partner's obligations, some twenty or thirty thousand. But I believe those claims will not come against me. When I entered into the copartnership, I happened to be wise enough to have a clause inserted in the agreement, protecting me from all prior obligations of my new associate in business."

"And well for you it is that you did so. Five thousand dollars, then, is all you owe. For your comfort, I will tell you, that, at your age, from imprudences similar to your own, I was ten thousand dollars in debt."

"And remained so for seven years?"

"Yes, and for more than that. It was ten years before I was able to wipe off old scores."

"O dear! I should die if I thought it would be ten years before I could write myself free from debt."

"It is not so easy a matter to die as you might think," the merchant replied, smiling.

"But what am I to do?" asked Grant, in real distress of mind.

"Do? Why there are many ways to do. All that is wanted is patience and resolution;—not mere excitement,—you have had enough of that. You felt, six years ago, as if you had the world in a sling. I saw it all, and knew where it would all end."

"Why did not you tell me so?"

"Because you would not have believed me. And, besides, 'bought wit is best.' No experience like a man's own! A few years of disappointment and trouble I saw would be necessary to thresh off the chaff of your character."

"And pretty well threshed I have been, verily! But, to come back to the one question ever uppermost in my mind. What am I to do?"

"There is one thing you can do, Henry," replied the merchant, "and that is to come into my store and receive a salary of twelve hundred dollars a year."

"My heart thanks you for your kind offer," replied the young man earnestly. "But, to do so, would be to act from a mere selfish regard to my own interests."

"How so?"

"The salary of a clerk will yield simply a support;—it cannot pay off my debts."

"You wish, then, to go again into business?"

"I must do something to relieve myself from debt."

"I do not see, as things now are, that going into business will accomplish this very desirable object. So far, business has only tended to involve you deeper and deeper."

"I know that, and it is because of this, that I am so terribly disheartened."

"Then come into my store, and devote yourself for a year or so to my business. It will yield you a living. By that time something may open before you. It is time enough yet, depend upon it, for you to enter the arena of strife as a merchant. The position is one requiring a cooler head and more experience than you are yet possessed of. I have long since been satisfied, from extensive observation, that, as a general rule, nine men out of ten fail, who enter into business as merchants, under thirty years of age."

At last, but with some reluctance, Henry Grant fell back into his old place as clerk, where he remained for four years. During that period, early painful experiences formed in his mind a true plane of thought. He was enabled to see how and where he had been in error, and how wrong ends had led

him into imprudent acts. He could not, at times, help smiling as a recollection of former states came up, in which it seemed to him, that he had but to lift his hand and gather in wealth to any extent. Then he was eloquent on principles of architectural taste, and could descant wisely upon rural beauties, enhanced by liberal art. Nowhere could he find a mansion either in the city or country, that fully came up to his ideas of what a rich man's dwelling should be. But a spirit far more subdued had now come over him. He could go up into higher regions of his mind, and see there in existence principles whose pure delights flowed not from the mere gratification of selfish and sensual pleasures. He was made deeply conscious, that even with all the wealth, and all the external things which wealth could give, for the gratification of the senses, and for the pampering of selfishness and pride, he could not be happy. That happiness must flow from an internal state, and not from any combination of external circumstances. About this time the oldest son of his employer arrived at his thirtieth year. Up to this period he had, since the attainment of his majority, held an interest in his father's business, which regularly yielded him about two thousand dollars per annum. A proposition to enter into business with his son, on a cash basis of twenty thousand dollars, and credit to any reasonable extent, was at once accepted by Grant.

Ten years from that day he was a sober-minded merchant, steadily and wisely pursuing his business, and worth every cent of fifty thousand dollars.

"The Fates have at last grown propitious," re-

marked old Mr. Linton to him one day, with a look and tone that was understood.

"I have only become a wiser man, I presume, and therefore better able to bear an improved condition," was the reply of Mr. Grant.

"Then you do not now regret your early disappointments?"

"O, no. I am truly thankful that I was not suffered to acquire wealth while under the influence of my vain, weak and foolish ideas. My reverses were blessings in disguise. They were sent as correctors of evil."

"That you can now see clearly?"

"O, yes. Had I been allowed to go on successfully, treasuring up wealth, I should have been made miserable. My weak desires would have been ever in advance of my abilities. I should have envied those who were able to make a more imposing appearance than myself, and despised all who were below me. And, surely, in this life, I can imagine no state so truly unhappy as that."

"He is the wise man," returned Mr. Linton, "who thus, from seeming evil educes goood. The longer we live, and the more of the ups and downs of life we see, the stronger becomes our conviction that there is One above all, and wiser than all, who rules events for our good. Between the ages of twenty-one and thirty are usually crowded more disappointments and discouraging circumstances—more trials and pains—than in all a man's after life. Will any one who has passed forty tell you in his sober reflective moments that he cannot look back and see that these have all worked together for his

good? I think not. And this will be the case as well with him who has grown rich as with him who still toils early and late for his daily bread."

"There is then, you believe, an overruling Providence that has some reference to a man's external condition in the world—permitting one to grow rich, and keeping another poor?"

"I do. But all this regards his eternal, and not his mere temporal condition. Our mistake lies in estimating the dealings of Providence as referring particularly to our external condition. This is not the case. We are regarded with a love that looks to our higher and better interests—to our spiritual and eternal good. External things, because it is by these that we are most affected, are so governed, as to lead us to think of interior things that appertain to the life within—to that life which we are to live when separated from the body. It matters not how blindly we are pursuing a course in which we are determined to succeed—the Great Ruler and Governor of all things will obstruct our way, if that way leads to our spiritual obstruction, and it is possible to turn us in a better way. Too often it happens that men are allowed to go on in evil courses, because, if turned from them, they would pursue after more direful, soul-destroying evils."

"If this lesson could only be received by us, and fully believed when we first enter upon life, how many bitter hours of discouragement it would save us," replied Mr. Grant, with feeling. "But experience is the only sure teacher. We only know what we have lived."

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